ANTIQUAMANIA

Edited by

Kenneth L. Roberts

The Collected Papers of

PROFESSOR MILTON KILGALLEN,

F. R. S., of Ugsworth College, Elucidating the Difficulties in the Path of the Antique Dealer and Collector, and Presenting Various Methods of Meeting and Overcoming Them.

With Further Illustrations, Elucidations and Wood-cuts Done on Feather-edged Boards

BY BOOTH TARKINGTON

DOUBLEDAY, DORAN & COMPANY, INC.
GARDEN CITY, 1928 NEW YORK

Antiquamania

BOOKS BY

KENNETH L. ROBERTS

EUROPE'S MORNING AFTER

WHY EUROPE LEAVES HOME

SUN HUNTING

BLACK MAGIC

CONCENTRATED NEW ENGLAND
(A Study of Calvin Coolidge)

FLORIDA LOAFING

THE COLLECTOR'S WHATNOT
(With Booth Tarkington and
Hugh MacNair Kahler)

FLORIDA

ANTIQUAMANIA

Portrait loaned by Mrs. Robert B. Choate.

Professor Kilgallen at an early age. His garb and surroundings indicate the manner in which a love for the beautiful was inculcated in him in the Spring-time of life. The lace at the neck, calves, and elbows is genuine Point de Cape Cod in Gothic Sandwich-glass taste

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Introduction	ix
Antique Primer for Beginners	3
General Antiqueing with Experts	11
How to Instruct the Little Tots in Antiques	47
I. Sheraton and Heppelwhite	47
II. Stiegel Glass	49
III. American and English Chippendale	51
IV. Antique Values	55
V. Antiques and Reproductions	57
VI. Walnut and Mahogany	61
Bottlefields	65
A Word on Currier & Ives	117
An Outline of Antiqueing	129
The Room in Good Taste	169
The Sad Case of Edgar Skipson & the Court Cupboard	181
One of the Early Ones	193
The Bottle Mine	201
Advice to Prospective New England Antique Dealers	223
Furnishing a Cape Cod Cottage on a Budget	237
The More Important Terms Used in Antiqueing	253

ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
Professor Kilgallen at an Early Age	Frontispiece
Rare Hessian and Daisy Plates	15
Exquisite Old Tripod Chair	39
Old Idaho Portrait Pottery	73
Old New England Tape-work Portrait Rug	81
Professor Kilgallen Discovering Stiegel Glass	94
Specimen Page from Professor Kilgallen's Notebook	105
Old Spatulate High-boy	137
Baxter's Dam Farm Scene Sampler	173
Professor Kilgallen's Race for the Highboy	182
Old Glandular Ware	207
Picking up Rare Old Bits of Pewter	229
Home of Professor Kilgallen at Barnacle Cove	238
Rare Croton and Fusil Print	243

INTRODUCTION

It is probable that no individual in modern times has so persistently delved into the origin and development of antiques in America, or so largely contributed to the knowledge of antiqueing, as Professor Milton Kilgallen, F.R.S., of Ugsworth College.

On November 11, 1927, Professor Kilgallen, accompanied by his colleagues Murgatroyd Elphinstone and Cornelius Obenchain Van Loot, discovered in an old barn on the outskirts of the town of Barnacle, Maine, an unusually fine diamond daisy flask in pale pink. This discovery, unusual as it was—for a diamond daisy flask in a pale pink had never before been discovered by a sober collector—was destined to be a disastrous one for the antiqueing world.

The flask was filled with liquid of some sort. Dr. Van Loot, ever eager to solve immediately all mysteries of the antiqueing field, sought to wrest the flask from Professor Kilgallen, who had reached it first, and open it at once on the ground that the flask's colour was an optical illusion caused by its liquid content.

Being of a more careful and scientific turn of mind than the enthusiastic Dr. Van Loot, Professor Kilgallen thrust the flask into a trouser pocket, and the three scientists hastened at once to Professor Kilgallen's beautiful home at Barnacle Cove, Maine, where Professor Milton Kilgallen has long worked with his brother, the distinguished piscatologist Professor Morton Kilgallen, F.R.S., of Ugsworth College, on the effect of concentrated or distilled cod liver oil when subcutaneously injected.*

Having arrived at the Kilgallen home, the three eager scientists gathered around a warm fire and discussed their find. At the end of a long argument Professor Kilgallen drew the flask from his pocket and held it firmly in his hands, while his colleagues bent closely over it to examine it.

It is believed that the flask, already warmed by lying in the Professor's pocket, and additionally warmed by its proximity to the fire and to the heavy breathing of the three scientists, was strained beyond its tensile strength.

At any rate, the flask exploded without warning, and Professor Kilgallen, Dr. Van Loot, and Dr. Elphinstone perished in the explosion.

So violent was this explosion—which, in a sense, may be said to have been heard around the

**Submarine Flora and Fauna of the Farralones, with a Study of the Greetle Fish,* Morton Kilgallen, Boston, 1911.

antiqueing world—that neighbours four and five miles distant believed that the great Kilgallen still for distilling cod-liver oil injections had blown up.

This explosion, fortunately, did not destroy Professor Kilgallen's notes on his investigations of antiques and antiqueing. Some of the notes were blown through the roof by the explosion and were picked up several hundred yards from Millstone Manor—the name given to his home by Professor Kilgallen because of his collection of rare and unusual millstones that he had picked up on his expeditions.

These notes could be pieced together because of the Professor's rare skill at note-taking, which permitted any one note to be inserted between any two notes without impairing the continuity of the thought or narrative.

No hardship was too great for Professor Kilgallen to endure when engaged in his investigations. He willingly associated with authors, editors and artists, if need be, in order to discover their methods and peculiarities in the acquisition of antiques. He was literally indefatigable in his efforts to clarify the moot points of antiqueing, and would listen for hours to collectors of curly maple, Currier & Ives prints, or any other sort of antiques while they went into the histories of their prize pieces and expatiated on their astuteness in

obtaining them. This is the more remarkable because he was not paid to listen, and only sacrificed himself for the good of future generations of antiquers and for the welfare of humanity.

K. L. R.

Barnacle Cove, Maine.
April 1, 1928.

Antique Primer for Beginners

The first steps are always the hardest. If the would-be collector will memorize the kindly but searching notes of Professor Kilgallen on the beginner's attitude toward antiques, and practise a few elementary postures before the mirror, he will find his path immeasurably smoothed. The Professor long insisted that one of the most potent gestures was that of drawing genuine money from the pocket and examining it carelessly in view of an antique dealer. If a dealer asked twenty dollars for an antique, the Professor drew a crisp ten-dollar note from his pocket and studied it absent-mindedly. The psychological effect, he said, was tremendous. Practise this gesture, using a genuine ten-dollar bill whenever possible.

ANTIQUE PRIMER FOR BEGINNERS

PERSONS who have had little or no experience in hunting for and purchasing antiques are greatly handicapped, frequently, by their lack of familiarity with the jargon or patois of dealers. Abashed by the superior knowledge—or what they think is the superior knowledge—of the dealer, they fail to acquire pieces that they would like to buy, or hurriedly purchase pieces without sufficient investigation.

The patois of antique dealers, however, is extremely limited in its scope, and can easily be mastered by a person with rudimentary intelligence in half an hour. Consequently, the beginner should never allow himself to be dazzled by it.

By learning a few stock phrases, however, such as "That's a nice piece," the beginner can approach any antique dealer in a manner that will convey the idea of great intelligence. If he then takes exception to everything the dealer says, he will quickly shake the dealer's confidence in his own ability and retain the upper hand in all ensuing transactions.

It must be remembered by every beginner that

no antique dealer or collector is quite sure of his ground. A contemptuous laugh inserted in a conversation at the proper moment will frequently be seemingly ignored by a dealer or a collector; but the sting of the laugh will remain with him for days on end, filling him with dreadful fear that his most cherished antique is not all that it should be.

EXAMPLE:

A customer, knowing little or nothing of antiques, enters an antique shop. As a matter of protection from the wiles of the dealer, he preserves a discreet silence. Discovering a chest of drawers that appeals to him, he examines it on all sides, while the dealer watches him with no inkling of his antique knowledge.

Having examined the piece to his satisfaction, the customer should ask one question of the dealer. The question is, "What do you call this piece?"

The dealer at once replies "Chippendale" or "Sheraton" or "Heppelwhite," as the case may be.

The customer should make no reply to this statement, but should laugh as sneeringly and as contemptuously as possible, and pass on to other parts of the shop without further comment. The same contemptuous laugh should be repeated in case the dealer presses the customer for an ex-

planation of his skeptical attitude; and in no case should the customer attempt to explain his reasons for laughing. The dealer, thinking that the customer knows more than he is willing to divulge, is at once placed on the defensive.

THERE are certain conventional openings that can be made by the customer. These will usually be met by equally conventional replies on the part of the dealer. The following openings and replies, if memorized by the ambitious beginner, will win respect for him in all antique shops:

EXAMPLES:

(1) *Customer:* What do you have to get for that piece?
Dealer: Six hundred dollars.
Customer: You may be able to kid Henry Ford, but you can't kid me.

(2) *Customer:* That's not a bad piece.
Dealer: That's a museum piece.
Customer (*laughing heartily*): Dime museum?

(3) *Customer:* Have you got any really good pieces?
Dealer (*indicating a table*): What's the matter with this?
Customer (*thoughtfully*): I might be able to use it in my kitchen.

(4) *Customer:* What's the history of this piece?

Dealer: That comes out of a house right in town. I been trying to get that piece for five years.

Customer: Life seems so futile, doesn't it?

(5) *Customer:* Do you think that piece is right?

Dealer: I'll guarantee that piece!

Customer: Most of these guarantees are a lot of hooey.

Dealer: If that piece ain't right, you can bring it back and I'll give you five dollars more than you paid for it.

Customer: Give me the five dollars now and sell it to somebody else.

(6) *Customer:* You got a nerve to ask any such prices as that.

Dealer: If you think that's a high price, just try to get another piece like it.

Customer: If you think that's a good answer, just try to get a job as a hog caller.

(7) *Customer:* This piece has too many replacements on it.

Dealer: There ain't a replacement on that piece!

Customer: Where do you think you'll go when you die?

IN ADDITION to the conventional openings, there are certain cryptic and useless observations that are used by all antique dealers in their efforts to stimulate eagerness in the customer and to effect a sale. There are a number of answers to these remarks, the only printable ones being "Is that so!" "Bologny!" "Apple sauce!" and "So's your old man!" These observations are as follows:

(1) That's one of the best pieces that ever come in this shop.

(2) Yes'm, all those legs are original.

(3) If you bought that piece down at Widget's, you'd pay a hundred dollars more for it, easy.

(4) I don't want to say anything against anybody, but you want to be careful what you buy from Widget. His place is all full of fakes.

(5) A piece like that only comes on the market about once in so often.

(6) Yes, I know what you want. I had one of 'em, but I sold it last week.

(7) No, it ain't that prices are so high: it's because you pick out the best and most expensive pieces I got.

(8) Henry Ford's buyer is coming up to look at that piece next week, and he'll pay anything I want to ask.

(9) You buy that piece! You won't ever regret it. Five years from now you won't be able to touch it for anything like that price.

(10) A good antique is the best investment you can make—better'n a gilt-edged bond.

General Antiqueing with Experts

No chance was too great for Professor Kilgallen to take in investigating antiqueing methods. The ensuing notes on an expedition into the general antiqueing field clearly show his utter disregard for caution and his contempt for the usual comforts and amenities demanded by dilettante antiquers of a light turn of mind. He deliberately surrounded himself, in this instance, with collectors whose passion for fine pieces might at any moment lead them to take the most extreme measures. These notes, if carefully examined and interpreted, will aid the student of antiqueing in discarding all frivolities and embarking on an antiqueing career with the grim earnestness which such a career demands.

GENERAL ANTIQUEING WITH EXPERTS

I

THERE is more to any business or pursuit than one sees on the surface, whether the pursuit or business be bird hunting, landscape painting, grocery-store keeping, the application of rouge to the face, or ordering a dinner.

In the business of bird hunting, for example, one must consider the training of the dogs which are used in that activity: shall the dogs be rebuked for transgressions of the hunting code by the Montessori method—with a few severe words, that is to say; or shall they be kicked briskly in the short ribs; or shall they be corrected by means of a spiked collar or a charge of No. 10 shot in the southeastern exposure? This is only one of many problems that do not occur to the person who goes hunting for the first time.

Of recent years the collecting of antique furniture, antique baubles, and antique whim-whams of various sorts has reached a high position among American pursuits, and at the present time it is estimated that at least one out of every twelve people in the United States has had traffic

with an antique dealer who claims to be collecting for Henry Ford.

It might be added at this point that if all the antique dealers who claim to have sold one or more antiques to Mr. Ford are telling the truth, Mr. Ford will be able to furnish as many houses as there are in Springfield, Massachusetts, with highboys, lowboys, carboys, wrought iron skillets, Carver chairs, Franklin stoves, four-poster beds, Sheraton hat racks, Chippendale coat hangers, Adam andirons, Nebuchadnezzar whatnots, rare old New England carriage seats decorated with the original tobacco juice, fine old saddle bottles, graceful old Haig & Haig bottles, and thousands of other things that must, for obvious reasons, be ever dear to collectors' hearts.

It might also be remarked in passing that if Mr. Ford had paid the prices that the garrulous antique dealers claim that he paid for these objects of art, the vast earnings of his automobile factories would long ago have vanished away where the mournful cry of the bul-bul is heard in the land, and he would have been obliged to touch President Coolidge for seven dollars at the same time that he relieved him of the old Coolidge sap bucket.

But in spite of the wide popularity of antique collecting, there are certain fine points to the pursuit that can only be learned by constant contact with antiques and antique collectors, just as one

can only become thoroughly acquainted with seasickness by personal contact with several storms at sea.

One must know whether it is more desirable for the mouldings on a chest of drawers to consist of a cyma reversa and a wide fillet, or of a quarter-round, a fillet, a cove, and a fillet. One should even be able to argue in favour of having the mouldings consist of a fillet, a cove, an astragal, a fillet, and a small cove.

One should have a comprehensive grasp of what it is that an astragal does to the base mouldings, if any; and if one lacks that comprehensive grasp, one should be able to simulate comprehension with such assurance as to confound any other person who thinks that he knows all about it.

One should know all about feet and legs and knees and block fronts and swell fronts and so on—not human legs and knees and swell fronts, of course, but the brand in which antique collectors take such a passionate interest.

If an antique dealer offers a chest for sale, it is almost essential that one should know whether it has straight bracket feet, bird's claw and ball bracket feet, or ogee bracket feet with a scroll finish, such as was characteristic of the Rhode Island type.

The embarrassment of the amateur antiquer who proceeds on the assumption that a chest of drawers has just plain feet, and is discovered in

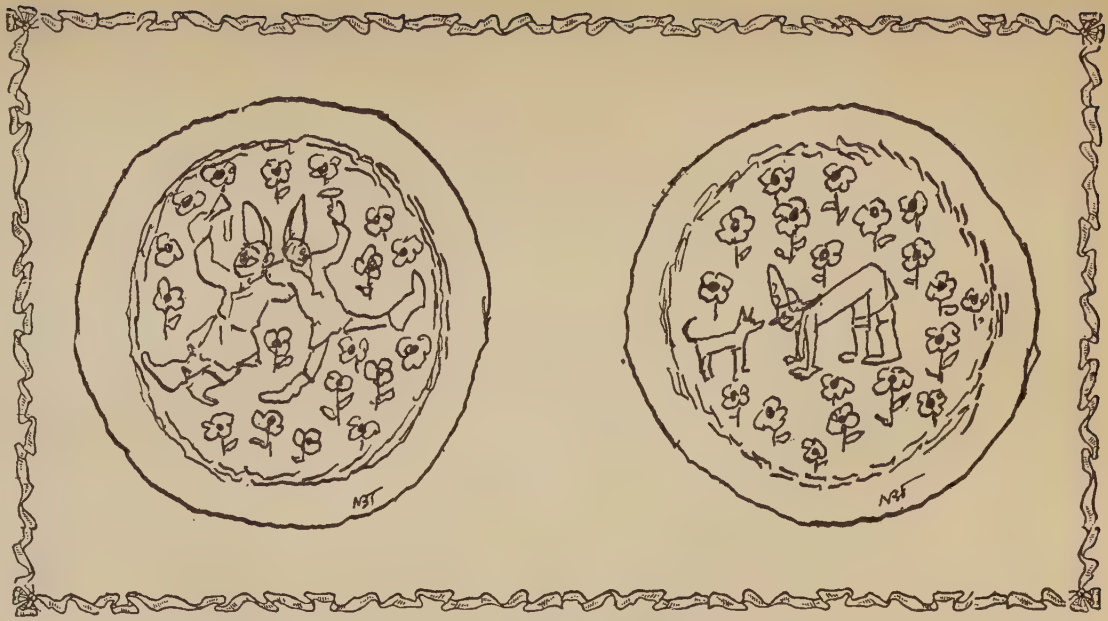
his ignorance, can be compared only to the embarrassment of the person who inquires solicitously for a friend's wife and learns that she obtained a divorce a few weeks previous, or to that of the furniture enthusiast who doesn't know the difference between a Rhode Island type chest and a Minnesota or South Dakota or Michigan type chest.

II

Many collectors are aware that in examining or purchasing an antique chair, one must always turn the chair upside down and scrutinize all its concealed features with an absolute lack of delicacy and restraint, but many of them do not know the reason for this scrutiny. The basic reason, as Dr. Van Loot has so ably pointed out,* is for the purpose of warning the owner of the chair that he would do well not to attempt to mislead, overcharge, or otherwise hornswoggle the would-be purchaser.

There are other nuances to the purchasing of antiques that can best be understood by associating with experienced purchasers and studying their ways. Some persons lack the endurance or the opportunity to form such associations. For the benefit of such persons I joined three of the leading amateur antiquers of America in one of

**When and Why to Turn a Chair Upside Down,* C. O. Van Loot, 1922.



Two very rare old Hessian and Daisy plates from Chestnut Hill.

the periodical raids that they make on the antique shops in old Virginia, where two thirds of the poultry in the suburban districts have reared their broods for more than half a century in rare old Heppelwhite sideboards, magnificent old cabriole-legged scrutoires, or exquisite old block-front chests-on-chests that the old families of old Virginia long ago relegated to the old barn along with the old hair trunk and the little old gray shawl that old Aunt Callista used to wear.

The notes made during this expedition will doubtless be of service to all antique collectors.

The raid was led by Mr. George H. Lorimer, the distinguished Philadelphia editor whose collection of Georgian silver is almost large enough for all the Georges east of the Mississippi River to dine from at any given moment; and minor or branch raids were conducted from time to time by the other two raiders, Mr. Joseph Hergesheimer, the popular novelist, and Mr. M. L. Blumenthal, the talented artist, both of whom admit that they know more about early American furniture than anyone else, including each other.

The raiding party was accompanied, by request, by the wife of one of the raiders, so that additional notes might be made on the advantages or disadvantages of permitting the gentler sex to accompany a corps of male antiquers.

It should be said without delay that the average woman, accustomed to the normal amenities and

niceties of modern civilization, must inevitably fail to realize that the ruthless competition between genuine antique ferrets frequently causes them to thrust frail women rudely from their paths and crush the fairest flowers beneath their feet in their determination to have the first chance at a six-legged highboy with skirt and stretchers cut in a double cyma curve. She is apt to forget, in these days of equal rights for women, that there are still occasions when woman's place is the home.

Realization, however, was not slow in coming in this particular case; for at the first stop made by the raiders Mr. Hergesheimer, in his anxiety to enter the antique emporium ahead of his friend Mr. Lorimer, kicked her heartily in the knee while descending from the automobile.

As for Mr. Lorimer, his determination to outdistance Mr. Hergesheimer in the race led him to leap from the opposite side of the automobile without opening the door; and in the take-off he was unfortunate enough to step heavily on her handbag and mash her lipstick into a welter of powder, mirror, street-car tokens, keys, small change, cooking recipes, pencil stubs, and one-dollar bills.

She was, it is true, assisted from the automobile by the more gentlemanly Mr. Blumenthal; but because of this delay Mr. Blumenthal was done out of an opportunity to acquire a beautiful

pewter slop bowl, and was later heard to declare openly that women were all the time asking for equal rights, and that thereafter any woman who went antiqueing with him could have all the equal rights in the world as far as he was concerned.

III

A raid into Virginia from Northern territory presupposes an investigation into the contents of Washington antique shops. Fortunately the conversational enthusiasm that infects legislators soon after their arrival in Washington has, in the past two or three years, spread to most of the Washington real-estate dealers and house owners.

Few legislators, because of conversational enthusiasm, are able to speak on any given subject without interestingly taking up thousands of unrelated subjects and conversing about them with fascinating signs of intelligence.

The Senator who rises to speak on the fertilizer industry or the necessity of investigating the prevalence of hair bobbing will almost inevitably introduce such matters as early Indian customs, the philosophy of Benjamin Franklin, the suffering farmer, the silent man in the White House, tungsten, vetch, the Isle of Pines, the contemptible political tactics of the distinguished Senators on the opposite side of the aisle, oleomargarine, stamp collecting, European politics, the pride of the Japanese people, the approaching elections,

the lesson of the last elections, the Prohibition Law, the Constitution, the outstretched hands of little children yet unborn, the voice of the American people, and the sister Republics to the South.

Washington real-estate dealers, when they were uplifted by the same enthusiasm, were not content merely to try to rent their houses, but added to the delightful atmosphere of the capitol city by renting all the social and political atmosphere that surrounded them.

When the prospective tenant asked, "How much is this house?" the real-estate dealer made no terse financial statement, but added human interest and sentiment to the affair by replying: "Wait a minute: from the third floor of this house you can see over into the back yard of Mrs. J. Fingle Munk, who entertains once a day when Congress is in session and twice on holidays. You will keep your automobile in the same garage with two senators and a Cabinet officer. The children of the richest Congressman from New England will wake you up with their appealing cries at half-past six every morning. Two retired admirals, six wealthy widows, and a justice of the Supreme Court buy their lamb chops at the meat market just around the corner. It is one of the most desirable locations in Washington." He then revealed the price, which was—and is—only about half as much as anybody should be willing to pay for such romantic associations.

The antique dealers are blessed with the same ability to invest their wares with interest and historical association. One enters a Washington antique shop and idly picks up a small piece of china two inches high and three inches wide. By itself it has little interest, and might be used either as an aquarium ornament or to throw at the cat. The dealer, however, changes the whole situation with a few words.

"That," he remarks, taking a long breath and shifting over onto his strong leg, "that belonged for many years to Mrs. Hebron M. Firbolg, the wife of Senator Firbolg, you know. She brought it here herself. Senator Firbolg was very fond of it, because it was given to him by Admiral Ens, and the Admiral got it when he was privateering off the coast of France. It is a genuine piece of Glandular ware. See the colours on it! Aren't they lovely? It's a museum piece, you know: yes, it really belongs in the Museum, but they haven't enough money, and I guess they deserved to lose it."

Still in the dark as to what it is, one asks the price out of curiosity, and is told that it costs sixty dollars—which is a standard price in Washington for small articles with histories.

The Washington antique dealers happily insist on attempting to sell the associations that cluster around their antiques as well as the antiques themselves, and some of them have a genuine talent

for originating associations for antiques that have none of their own, thus increasing their value immeasurably.

If one furnished a three-room apartment with antiques purchased in Washington antique shops, he would not only have at least three hundred dollars' worth of furniture and objects of art, but he would also have about thirty thousand dollars' worth of association. This is gratifying and comforting for the sentimental owner, and deeply interesting for his visitors, who are spiritually uplifted by sitting in a chair if they can feel sure it was one in which the boy Millard Fillmore was accustomed to sit when roasting apples in the kitchen stove.

For this reason the true antiquer can spend many happy days amid the historic old paper weights and cooking utensils and kitchen chairs and Britannia ware of Washington, and leave its purlieus regretfully for the less sophisticated antiqueries of the southland.

Unfortunately the three great amateur antiquers, Mr. Lorimer, Mr. Hergesheimer, and Mr. Blumenthal—and it should be distinctly understood that in the entire nation there are few if any greater authorities on early Americana, from candlesticks to corner cupboards—were specializing at the moment on inlaid antiques. Mr. Lorimer, after inspecting the Washington situation, gave it as his carefully considered opinion that

not even the greatest expert in the world could discover any inlay on an historical association. Consequently the expedition hurriedly crossed the Potomac and fared into Virginia with all possible speed.

IV

A cardinal maxim for all genuine antique hunters is, "Get there in a hurry: somebody might beat you to it."

Acting on this maxim they passed through the ancient town of Alexandria without a flicker of the eyelids, evinced no interest at all when they whizzed past the turn-off to Mount Vernon, and roared by the beautiful church at Pohick with a casual speculation as to whether one would have much difficulty in stealing the hardware from the front door on a dark night.

This attitude is one that might be adopted to good advantage by all antique collectors.

In spite of the speed with which they rushed through these historic spots, however, it was apparent from their conversation that they were keenly devoted to the loveliest products of America's early craftsmen. This attitude should be studied by all students of antiqueing. The antiquer must school himself to conceal his thoughts from antique dealers, from his friends and from himself, if need be, in order that his plans may not be frustrated.

"I'll tell you right now," declared Mr. Lorimer in an arbitrary manner, "if there's a Windsor writing chair with a comb top down at Lily Stirrup's place in Oakland, it's mine. I speak for it."

"It's yours if you get to it first," said Mr. Hergesheimer with apparent indifference.

"I've got one of those," said Mr. Blumenthal happily. "I got it for fifty dollars. The man that owned it didn't know what he had. We were driving by and saw it sitting out on the porch, so we went up and asked for a glass of water. I'd have paid two hundred for it. Fifty dollars, it was. I said to him, 'What's that?' and he said, 'That's a chair.' It's one of the finest specimens ever discovered. Fifty dollars was what——"

"Where do you date it?" interrupted Mr. Lorimer with a cold look.

"Seventeen thirty," said Mr. Blumenthal with a pleased smile.

"What do you mean, 1730?" asked Mr. Hergesheimer savagely. "I've seen that chair, and it's 1790. It might even be 1795."

"How do you know, Hergie?" demanded Mr. Lorimer, pretending indifference.

"Why, because I can tell," protested Mr. Hergesheimer. "I can tell by looking at it. Anybody who knows anything about furniture can tell."

"Well, I know something about furniture," said Mr. Blumenthal joyously, "and I say it's

1730. It might even be 1725. It's right between 1725 and 1730."

"Grape Jelly!" exclaimed the great author in a contemptuous manner. "Anyway, those Windsors don't interest me. I wouldn't have one as a gift. The only thing that I care anything about is a good sideboard. There is something so adorably feminine about them, especially when they have eight adorable little legs. You know that adorable little sideboard that I have, don't you, Lorimer, with the satinwood shells and oval panels on the stiles, and the adorable pendent flowers on the legs?"

"Yes, I know that one," said Lorimer. "I need one just like that in my kitchen."

"Kitchen!" expostulated Hergesheimer in pained tones. "Kitchen!" Then he calmed himself with an effort and looked appealingly at Lorimer. "Now, look here, Lorimer," he continued persuasively, "if you'll let my sideboards alone, I'll let your Windsors alone. Come on, now, Lorimer, that's all I want: nothing but sideboards. Of course, if I could find one of those handkerchiefs printed with Mexican War scenes, I'd want that. Those are becoming very rare, Lorimer."

"Certainly they're becoming rare," said Lorimer. "It was only a month ago that you called me a sucker for paying fifty dollars for one, though. A month ago you were shouting all over Pennsylvania that you wouldn't have one of them

in your house, and now you come around and tell me that they're becoming rare."

"Well, I've studied them seriously since then," said the great novelist and amateur antiquer.

"Sure you have," said the distinguished antique collector and editor, "you've given a lot of serious study to the way I handed out fifty dollars for one of them."

"That's all right," declared Hergesheimer in a conciliatory manner, "I notice that you always said you never would have any pewter around your house; but as soon as you saw me picking up all the pewter in sight, you went to that Baltimore place when I was busy somewhere else and bought six pewter communion cups that I had been watching for two or three months."

"Is that so!" said Lorimer.

"Yes," said Hergesheimer, "and the cups weren't any good, either."

"Certainly they were good," said Lorimer. "They were early American."

"They may have been early American," admitted Hergesheimer smugly, "but they didn't have any touch marks."

"Touch marks hell," said Lorimer. "They were early American, and the pewter was good, and they were beautiful. What do I care about touch marks!"

"When you know as much about pewter as I do," said Hergesheimer, "you will refuse to have

anything to do with any pewter that isn't stamped with the name of an American pewterer or with one of Kerfoot's four unidentified eagles."

"Is that so!" said Lorimer in a coldly sarcastic voice. "I suppose I might as well sell those six communion cups, then."

"Is that so?" exclaimed Hergesheimer eagerly. "How much do you want for them?"

Active hostilities between the great editor and the great novelist were prevented by the distinguished artist Mr. Blumenthal, who interrupted at this point to ask whether either Mr. Hergesheimer or Mr. Lorimer were interested in hutch tables, and to remark feelingly that if they were not, he would be greatly obliged if they would permit him to negotiate for any hutch tables that might be located in Miss Lily Stirrup's antique emporium at Oakland.

V

It was apparent from all this that Miss Stirrup's antique shop—which was one of the four chief objectives of the entire trip—must be the repository of millions of beautiful old pieces of furniture; that it would be a huge and shadowy structure, into which each antiquer would rush and preëmpt a corner, so that as he discovered a piece that appealed to him, he could separate it from the mass and drag it noisily into his own corner.

Within an hour or so after the antiquers had entered the place, one readily foresaw, each one would be crouched like a great hungry spider over his private pile of antiques, growling at the others and trying to decide whether or not to buy.

The buying, one realized, would be terrific. A freight car or at least a large motor truck would be required to transport the booty.

Yet when the town of Oakland was reached and the antique emporium of Miss Lily Stirrup was discovered at the end of a street that was last paved during the adolescence of Jefferson Davis, it was apparent that one should never allow his opinion to be formed in advance by the enthusiasms of an antique collector.

The house was large enough to provide living quarters for two people; but only an inveterate optimist would have credited it with being large enough for two people and a dog. Miss Stirrup's entire store of antiques, moreover, was gathered together in a front hall measuring six feet by eight feet, and in a front room measuring twelve feet by twelve feet.

The bulk of the antiques, consisting of a large and badly dented sideboard, six pieces of assorted pewter, seven pieces of cracked china, a warped chest, a number of old prints, five chairs of doubtful antecedents, and fifteen or twenty other oddments, were assembled in the front room; and into this front room instantly squeezed the eager

Messrs. Lorimer, Hergesheimer, and Blumenthal, the lady wife of one of the antiquers, the note taker, Miss Stirrup, and Miss Stirrup's brother, whose attitude toward antiques seemed to be one of amused tolerance.

Congested quarters, however, will never shake the equilibrium of the well-grounded antique collector. When Mr. Lorimer stooped to examine a chair and Mr. Hergesheimer stopped to examine the sideboard at one and the same time, Miss Stirrup was knocked over onto the chest and Mr. Blumenthal was pushed backward onto the feet of Miss Stirrup's brother. If one more person had attempted to enter the room at that moment, he could never have been successful in his attempt unless the sideboard had collapsed or unless one of the walls of the room had yielded to the pressure and fallen outward. Yet neither Mr. Lorimer, Mr. Hergesheimer, nor Mr. Blumenthal permitted himself to be disturbed or distracted by the situation.

When Miss Stirrup had recovered her breath, she explained optimistically that as soon as she sold her sideboard for one thousand dollars she hoped to enlarge her stock of antiques, inasmuch as the profit that she would derive from the sale would enable her to buy a Ford and give her enough capital to lay in some really choice pieces in addition. She then looked hopefully at Mr. Hergesheimer, whose passion for adorable side-

boards had long been the subject of conversation in Virginia antique circles. Mr. Hergesheimer's only expression of opinion concerning the sideboard, however, was that he thought Mr. Lorimer ought to buy it; whereupon Mr. Lorimer gazed at the sideboard with evident admiration and said that he thought it was exactly what Mr. Hergesheimer ought to have. Mr. Hergesheimer then stated that if the party expected to reach Richwood in time to get anything to eat, it had better be on its way, while Mr. Lorimer glared absentmindedly at the bottom of a cracked plate and murmured something about a good thick steak.

Mr. Blumenthal ruminatingly removed a pewter bowl from a pile of old books on the table in order to examine the books; and Mr. Hergesheimer, preparing to leave the room, placed the pewter bowl on the sideboard so that he wouldn't knock it on the floor. Mr. Lorimer, following Mr. Hergesheimer, replaced the pewter bowl on the table, whereupon the note taker picked it up and asked Miss Stirrup the price. He was told fifteen dollars and immediately purchased it.

Mr. Hergesheimer then examined the bowl, asked why it hadn't been shown to him, and pointed out that the touch marks were not clear. Mr. Lorimer took it from Mr. Hergesheimer and clearly intimated that the note taker had hidden it from the others on entering the room. Mr. Blumenthal took it from Mr. Lorimer with a

venomous glance at its new owner and stated that if he had not waited to assist a lady from the automobile, he would have been the first to enter the room, and would have bought the bowl for himself. Mr. Lorimer, with a defiant air, then purchased a glass *mille fleur* paper weight for five dollars, and the entire party left Miss Stirrup's antique emporium in an aura of suspicion verging on downright dislike.

VI

The beautiful city of Richwood, which was next on the list of the antique raiders, is a mere seventy or eighty miles beyond Oakland; and as soon as the little group of raiders had settled themselves in the automobile once more and were tearing past Virginia's historic battlegrounds and ancient mansions at fifty-eight miles an hour, their spirits quickly rose at the thought of the gems of early Americana that awaited them in their favourite dealer's.

"We can get all we want at Brush's," declared Mr. Hergesheimer confidently. "Brush is a great connoisseur and has men picking up the best things for him all over Virginia. Twelve rooms full of things, he has: fine old pieces; adorable little sideboards; fascinating gate-leg tables; adorable cellarettes; adorable pie-crusts. Remarkable character, Brush."

"Has he got any hutch tables?" asked Mr.

Blumenthal anxiously. "I hope nobody else here cares anything about hutch tables."

"Has he got any Windsor writing chairs with comb tops?" asked Mr. Lorimer. "And if he has a good corner cupboard with chamfered sides and inlaid medallions and that sort of thing, it's mine. I speak for it."

"Oh, is that so," said Mr. Hergesheimer coldly. "Well, before you get hoarse speaking for it, I'd like to take a look at it myself. "

Chattering thus in the manner of confirmed antiquers, the party swept briskly into Richwood and past the statues of Confederate heroes, whose only effect on the raiders was to lead one of them to remark that if Brush had a decent hutch table for sale, he deserved to have a statue of his own in Richwood. Pausing only long enough to permit the individual members to wrap themselves around a thick and juicy steak, the party hastened on to Brush's, where Brush himself awaited his visitors with his face wreathed in a toothsome, gum-revealing smile in which confidence, doubt, cupidity, and chaw-tobacco appeared to be blended in equal proportions.

Heartily passing the time of day and the compliments of the season with Mr. Brush, the little party hastened toward the house. On the porch stood a very ancient and mildewed pine table that had, from time to time, apparently been assaulted

by its former owners with blunt instruments. It was the type of table known as a tavern table, with an oval top about the size of a tea tray. It was broken in nine places.

"How much is this table, Brush?" asked one of the party, evidently thinking it might be worth mending if it could be bought for fifteen dollars or less.

"One hundred and seventy-five dollars," replied Brush, enveloping the questioner in a warily benevolent and tobacco-stained smile.

A rich silence immediately enveloped the party, which pressed on into the house in deep meditation and with a noticeable lowering of the spirits.

"Haven't I seen this scroll-top high chest of drawers before?" asked Mr. Hergesheimer, pausing before a dilapidated piece of furniture from which pieces of discoloured wood were peeling.

"Yes, indeed," said Brush cheerfully. "That's the chest that belonged to Thomas Jefferson's grandmother, and I got the papers to prove it."

"Still the same price?" asked Mr. Lorimer in a voice similar to that in which one asks whether the murderer is to be electrocuted or hanged.

"Yes," said Mr. Brush. "Still five thousand dollars."

"How much do you have to get for that table, Mr. Brush?" asked Mr. Hergesheimer.

"Three thousand dollars," said Mr. Brush without a moment's hesitation.

"How much do you have to get for these chairs, Mr. Brush?" asked Mr. Lorimer.

"I have to get twenty-two hundred for those chairs, Mr. Lorimer," said Mr. Brush.

Led by Mr. Brush, the little party wandered slowly from unheated room to unheated room, shivering noticeably whenever a price was asked or given—possibly from the chill in the rooms and possibly from something else. Only one room was heated—the room in which Mrs. Brush sat contemplatively before a latrobe heater, knitting with an expressionless face. Mr. Brush threw open the door of the room and urged his visitors to enter.

"Just the same as every room. Everything in it for sale," said he.

Mrs. Brush raised cold eyes to him, and he amended the statement hastily. "All the furniture for sale, I mean," said he.

Mr. Hergesheimer and Mr. Lorimer scrutinized the sofa on which the lady sat.

"Nice sofa," said Mr. Brush, leering affectionately at it.

"How much do you have to get for that sofa?" asked Mr. Hergesheimer.

"I have to get nine hundred for that sofa, Mr. Hergesheimer," said Mr. Brush.

Mr. Hergesheimer left the room hastily.

"How do you like the antique business, Mrs. Brush?" asked the note taker's wife.

"Well, I don't know," replied Mrs. Brush. "As soon as you get used to one dining room table, somebody comes along and buys it and you have to start using another."

The party resumed its silent inspection of the tomblike rooms.

"How much for that old pine chest with the broken lid and the feet knocked off?" asked the note taker.

"One hundred and twenty-five," said Mr. Brush happily.

The skeptical student left the house and got a drink from a flask in the automobile.

Some time later the little party, with the exception of Mr. Blumenthal, straggled shivering from the house and looked at each other with cold gray faces.

"Come over to the shed and see if there's anything you like," said Mr. Brush genially.

"Got anything under a thousand dollars over there?" asked the note taker, moved to speech by his communion with the flask.

Mr. Blumenthal emerged from the house with a frayed sampler one foot square, on which were set forth in silk embroidery the reactions of Minnie May Hesterbrook, aged 11, to the wonders of nature. "How much is this sampler, Mr. Brush?" he asked.

"Ten dollars," said Mr. Brush without looking at it.

Mr. Blumenthal promptly produced ten dollars and then sat down on the running board of the automobile to brood lovingly over his purchase. The rest of the party continued onward to the shed, where the note taker discovered three large wrought-iron trivets with revolving plates, each plate being pierced in an unusual and beautiful manner. A tag on each one stated that its price was ten dollars.

"I'll take these," said the note taker, assembling all three of them in a pile and reaching for his money.

"Yes, those are nice ones," said Mr. Brush, looking at them with deep affection. "They're sold," he added as an afterthought.

"Can't I have 'em?" asked the note taker hoarsely.

"No, they're sold," said Mr. Brush.

The note taker went out in the back yard, stood firmly and uncompromisingly in the middle of a large flock of hens, and emitted a flow of language on the general subject of antiques, antique dealers, and antique prices that would have raised blisters on an elephant's back. A few minutes later the remainder of the party emerged glum and empty-handed from the shed, aroused Mr. Blumenthal, who was still deep in admiring contemplation of his ten-dollar sampler, entered the automobile, and left that great character Mr. Brush smiling an enigmatic and nicotiny smile in

front of his five-thousand-dollar chest and his three-thousand-dollar table and his hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of furniture that would be sold at almost any moment to wealthy persons whose natures were freer from suspicion than those of Mr. Lorimer's expedition.

VII

As soon as the automobile had been headed at full speed toward Petersville, third great objective of the expedition, Mr. Blumenthal drew his sampler from his pocket, exhibited it proudly to each member of the expedition in turn, and dwelt in great detail on the exact spot where he had found it, the thoughts that had passed through his mind while he was thinking about buying it, and his plans for its ultimate destination. It was evident, however, that interest in the sampler might have been keener.

"Where do you date it, Mr. B.?" asked Mr. Hergesheimer wearily.

"Why, I date it 1792, Mr. H.," replied Mr. Blumenthal.

"Nonsense," said Mr. Hergesheimer carelessly, "it is obviously between 1820 and 1825."

"But it is dated 1792 right in the embroidery, Mr. H.," protested Mr. Blumenthal.

"Probably a mistake on the part of the embroiderer, Mr. B.," said Mr. Hergesheimer coldly, "or a deliberate attempt to increase the

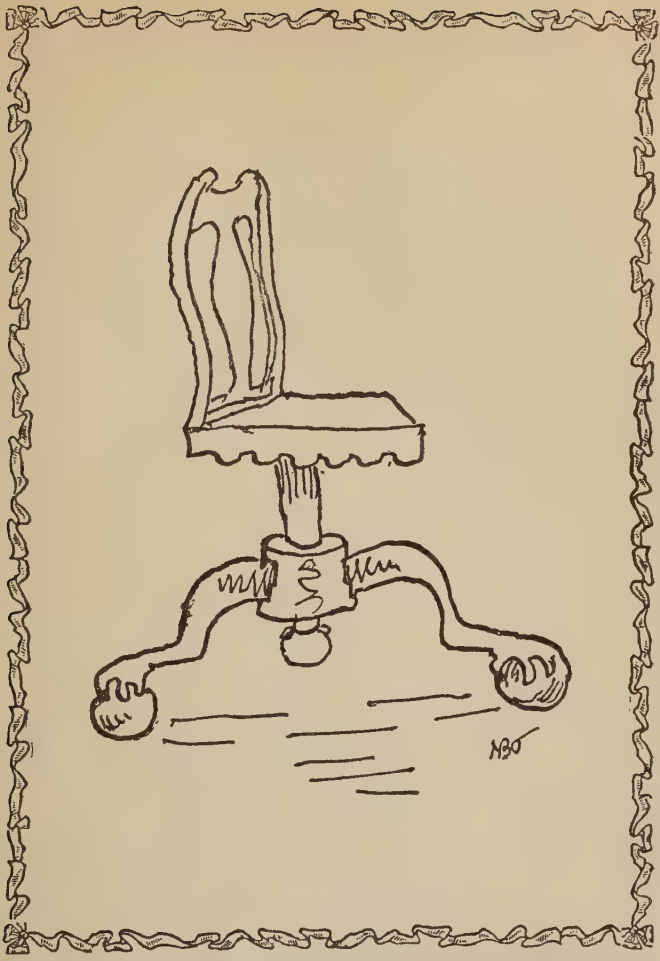
value of the sampler by antedating it about thirty years."

Chattering thus light-heartedly in a manner that might to good advantage be followed by all antiquers, the expedition quickly covered the eighteen miles between Richwood and Petersville.

As the automobile drew up before the Petersville antique shop, that hidden sixth sense that warns all true antiquers of the presence of desirable antiques—and that should be developed by all collectors—led the three antique experts to eject themselves so vivaciously from their seats that they arrived simultaneously at the door of the shop.

Having effected an entry after some struggling, each one of the three swooped down on and hid behind his back an article concerning which he conferred privily with the shop owner. In each instance the owner, after examining the article in question with care, loudly replied, "Five dollars!"

When the money had passed, it was discovered that no hutch tables or Windsor writing chairs or adorable sideboards or anything of the sort had changed hands, but that Mr. Blumenthal had purchased a light green bottle, evidently intended at one time to hold whisky, that Mr. Hergesheimer had purchased a dark blue bottle, evidently intended to hold bitters, and that Mr.



Exquisite old tripod chair with claw-and-ball feet. The Chippendale influence is very strong; but the chair cannot definitely be assigned to that school. It is unsigned.

(*Property of Hon. Selim C. Peale, of West Kennebunk, Me.*)

Lorimer had purchased a rich dark brown bottle, evidently intended originally to hold rum.

When this transaction had been completed, and the three persons had carefully secreted their bottles on their persons, they politely inquired of the note taker whether he had found anything, and were told that he had found a fine pair of early Colonial andirons with brass tops for twenty dollars.

They at once demanded to see the andirons; and then they stated that if for any reason the note taker did not wish to retain the andirons himself, they would be willing to relieve him of them. It seemed to the note taker that they felt he should say that he hadn't really wanted the andirons, and that he would be glad to be relieved of them, but he may possibly have been mistaken. Antique collectors must, at all costs, cultivate the art of misunderstanding at the proper time and place. Generosity cannot exist between antiquers.

The note taker further stated to his hosts that he had been considering the purchase of a large slant-top scrutoire with a glass-doored cabinet top. On viewing this piece, all three of his hosts enthusiastically recommended that he purchase it. They pointed out that the price asked for it—two hundred and fifty dollars—was not unreasonable; that only seven panes of glass had been broken out of the cabinet doors; that the doors

could be rehung with new hinges and made to look all right; that only a few small pieces of wood needed to be let into the slant-top desk lid; that it only needed nine new brass handles and keyhole escutcheons, which could probably be purchased for twenty dollars or so; that its missing feet could be replaced comparatively easily with carved ogee brackets; and that after it had been gently scraped, rubbed down with pumice, carefully varnished, rubbed with pumice once more and liberally waxed, it would be a piece well worth having. So the note taker made the purchase and the party moved on rejoicing toward its last and greatest objective. If the collector cannot advise himself, he will find it cheaper to get his advice from books than from brother antiquers.

VIII

As the automobile sped onward, Mr. Blumenthal fondled his light green bottle and called on each member of the party to admire it. Mr. Lorimer, however, was too busy admiring his own rich dark brown bottle, just as Mr. Hergesheimer was too much absorbed in the lights and shadows which played across the surface of his dark blue bottle; while the note taker was too deeply engrossed in picturing the beauty of his new secretary when it should have been supplied

with new ogee bracket feet and beautiful new imported brass handles.

When the raiders arrived at the final objective of the trip, whose whereabouts cannot be revealed because of a solemn oath sworn between them, their determination to be first through the door resulted in some damage to their own garments as well as to the cushions of the automobile, from which two of them jumped instead of waiting to open the automobile doors.

At this happy hunting ground, Mr. Hergesheimer obtained an adorable six-legged table. This and his dark blue bottle were, of course, the finest things obtained on the entire trip.

Mr. Lorimer purchased an early American sideboard and a corner cupboard. Mr. Blumenthal, it might be remarked in passing, placed the date of the sideboard around 1660; Mr. Hergesheimer placed it around 1730, and Mr. Lorimer placed it around 1690. These two pieces, with his dark brown bottle and his glass paper weight, it scarcely need be said, were the rarest gems of the many fine things unearthed by these three great amateur collectors.

Mr. Blumenthal was so fortunate as to get three early American bedspreads on which he was able to save shipping charges by absent-mindedly slipping them into Mr. Lorimer's early American sideboard; and these three bedspreads, together with Mr. Blumenthal's other purchases—

the light green bottle and the 1792 sampler—were without question the rarest and loveliest pieces that were found on the entire trip.

The note taker discovered an early American chest of drawers with nothing but four feet and three handles missing; and this piece, together with the pewter bowl, the Colonial andirons, and the cabinet-topped scrutoire, were by far the loveliest and most worth-while discoveries of the expedition. All of this must be true, for each member of the expedition frankly admitted it in setting forth his claim.

The great lesson of this expedition and every other antiqueing expedition of modern times is easy to detect: any antique is worth more to its purchaser than its purchase price. What it is worth to others is a matter of little moment.

How to Instruct the Little Tots in Antiques

The great aviator buttoned up his borrowed suit and went out with his host to call on the world's richest banker, who was excessively proud of his antiques.

After the banker and the great aviator had been introduced, the banker laughingly called the great aviator's attention to his latest acquisition—a very rare Chippendale chair with intricate carvings. "How's that for a chair?" he asked proudly.

"How's what?" asked the great aviator.

"That chair there," said the banker.

"Oh, yes," said the aviator noncommittally.

"You don't find 'em like that any more," said the banker.

"Why not?" asked the aviator.

"Well, hell, because you don't!" said the banker. "Can't you see yourself how different it is?"

"No," said the aviator. "It looks like any other chair to me."

"Tell me," said the banker, shuddering, "how you felt at three o'clock in the morning when the fog shut in."

"I didn't feel," said the aviator. "It was just like anything else."

That night the banker complained bitterly to his friends. "It's a crime against humanity," he said, "when a child isn't taught about antiques while he's very young. There ought to be a law about it. . . ."

HOW TO INSTRUCT THE LITTLE TOTS IN ANTIQUES

(All scenes take place in the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum)

I. SHERATON AND HEPPELWHITE

FATHER: One of the most important things, darling, is the difference between Sheraton and Heppelwhite. I will show you.

LITTLE PHYLLIS: What fun!

FATHER: Do you see that sideboard over there? It has beautiful tapered legs.

LITTLE PHYLLIS: Not like mother's.

FATHER: No, darling. Tapered! Do you see how they are tapered? Square and tapered?

LITTLE PHYLLIS: Yes, Father.

FATHER: And at the bottom there is a band of inlay. Do you see it, Phyllis darling?

LITTLE PHYLLIS: How do you mean, Father?

FATHER: What do you mean, how do I mean?

LITTLE PHYLLIS: What is the band of inlay at the bottom of?

FATHER (*petulantly*): At the bottom of the legs, Phyllis!

LITTLE PHYLLIS: Near the ankles?

FATHER: Yes, near the ankles.

LITTLE PHYLLIS: Yes, Father: I can see it.

FATHER: What else did I tell you to notice about the legs?

LITTLE PHYLLIS: That they are square and tapered.

FATHER: That is right, darling. When you see legs like that on furniture, the furniture is always Heppelwhite. That is a Heppelwhite sideboard, Phyllis, and you must never forget it. Its legs are square and tapered and have a band of inlay at the bottom, and so it is a piece of Heppelwhite furniture.

LITTLE PHYLLIS (*advancing and reading the sign on the sideboard*): This card says "Sheraton influence," Father. What does that mean, Father? Does that mean Heppelwhite, Father?

FATHER (*looking at his watch*): Gracious, it's growing late. We must hurry if we want to see the rest of it!

LITTLE PHYLLIS: But why does it say Sheraton influence, Father?

FATHER: Don't ask Father so many questions, darling. He has a headache. Come, let us go up to the darker rooms and look at the early pine.

CURTAIN

II. STIEGEL GLASS

LITTLE HERMAN (*pointing rudely*): What is that old bottle with little bubbles in the glass?

TEACHER: Hush, Herman. That's a rare old Stiegel bottle.

HERMAN: Was Stiegel something you drink?

TEACHER: No, Herman: Stiegel was the man who made Stiegel glass.

HERMAN: Is it better than other kinds of glass?

TEACHER: A bottle like that would cost three hundred dollars.

HERMAN: Why would it?

TEACHER: Because it's Stiegel.

HERMAN: How do you know it's Stiegel?

TEACHER: Can't you read the card? The card says it's Stiegel.

HERMAN: Would you have known it was Stiegel if you hadn't seen the card?

TEACHER: Certainly!

HERMAN: It looks like any other kind of glass to me.

TEACHER: That's because you don't know anything about glass.

(*Enter two antique dealers, A and B*)

A: There's that Stiegel bottle.

B: If that's a Stiegel bottle, I'll chew it and eat it!

A: I found one just like it down in Central France last year.

B: Was it Stiegel?

A: I sold it for two hundred and fifty to a man in Philly who said it was Stiegel.

B: They're suckers on Stiegel in Philly.

A: You said a mouthful!

B: I got a crate of amethyst and blue flasks from Czecho-Slovakia, and they're better Stiegel than that bottle.

A: What you going to do? Plant 'em?

B: Yeah: I'm going to plant 'em through Pennsylvania.

A: Stiegel?

B: Sure: all Stiegel.

(*Exit A and B, laughing quietly*)

HERMAN: What is this bottle that says Wistarburg on it?

TEACHER (*malevolently*): I'll Wistarburg you!

CURTAIN

III. AMERICAN AND ENGLISH CHIPPENDALE

FATHER (*stopping before a Chippendale serving chair with carved knees, ball-and-claw feet, and handsomely carved back splat*): Take a good look at this Chippendale, my boy. Chippendale was the king of furniture makers, and the furniture that he designed is without a peer.

LITTLE RUDOLPH: I suppose it costs a lot of money, Father.

FATHER (*smiling ruefully*): Sometimes, my child, you'd think that American Chippendale pieces were made out of platinum instead of mahogany.

RUDOLPH: What do you mean by American Chippendale, Father?

FATHER: Chippendale furniture that was made in America, Rudolph. Most of the Chippendale pieces that you see were made in England; but some of them were made in America.

RUDOLPH: What is the difference, Father?

FATHER: Several hundred dollars a chair, my boy.

RUDOLPH: No, I mean what is there about an American Chippendale chair that makes it more valuable than an English Chippendale

chair? I suppose it is because a well-known American sat in it.

FATHER: Do not, I beg of you, Rudolph, make the mistake of thinking that sentiment or association has a market value. Some people are foolish enough to buy a chair because George Washington sat in it, but you can take it from me that this fact doesn't add a cent to the value of a chair.

RUDOLPH: Then why is it, Father, that American Chippendale is worth more than English Chippendale?

FATHER: Surely, Rudolph, you can understand that a chair made in America is more valuable than a chair made in England!

RUDOLPH: Was it because American chairs were more beautifully made than English chairs?

FATHER: No, my son. The English chairs were usually more elaborate and ornate. The American chairs were apt to be simpler in design, but they certainly aren't simpler in price. A pair of American Chippendale chairs sold for thirty-five hundred dollars not long ago.

RUDOLPH: Ow, wow!

FATHER: Ow, wow is right!

RUDOLPH: How is it that one tells the difference between an American and an English Chippendale chair?

FATHER: Well, it's one of the things that one learns by experience; but the best way to do is to go to a good reliable dealer.

RUDOLPH: How does a good reliable dealer know the difference?

FATHER: Well, you see he can trace the history of the chair.

RUDOLPH: Then he can't tell by merely looking at two chairs, Father?

FATHER: No: nobody can tell the difference by just looking at them.

RUDOLPH: Then an American Chippendale chair isn't more beautiful or better built than an English Chippendale chair, but is more valuable because it was made in America.

FATHER: That is it exactly, my child.

RUDOLPH: And is a Chippendale chair that was made in Providence more valuable than one that was made in New London?

FATHER: Don't be an ass, Rudolph! Of course not! What has Providence or New London got to do with it?

RUDOLPH: Well, it's a matter of geography, and so is the difference between American and English Chippendale chairs.

FATHER: Not at all, my child! It's more than geography! It's a matter of spiritual feeling and sentimental association.

RUDOLPH: But, Father, you just said that sentiment and association have no market value!

FATHER (*bitterly*): You're too young to understand the fine points of antique furniture!

RUDOLPH: But, Father! Wouldn't it be nicer for us to have a lot of fine English Chippendale chairs instead of an equal number of American Chippendale chairs that weren't nearly as beautiful?

FATHER: Oh, shut up!

CURTAIN

IV. ANTIQUE VALUES

UNCLE ERNEST (*indicating a Queen Anne day bed*): A fine antique is very valuable. That piece cost six thousand dollars.

NEPHEW FRED: That's what our house cost!

UNCLE: Ten years from now your house won't be worth half as much as that piece of furniture.

FRED: Why is it worth so much?

UNCLE: Because it's a rare old antique.

FRED: How can you tell how much it's worth?

UNCLE: The man who sells it to you puts a price on it.

FRED: Is that what he paid for it?

UNCLE: No, that's more than he paid for it. He has to make a profit on it.

FRED: Then if I have a piece just like it that somebody gave me, would it be worth six thousand dollars?

UNCLE: It would if you could get it.

FRED: What would it be worth if I couldn't get it?

UNCLE: How do I know?

FRED: How does anybody know what an antique is worth?

UNCLE: Nobody does until somebody pays a price for it.

FRED: If nobody would pay anything for it, it wouldn't be worth anything, would it?

UNCLE: I wouldn't go as far as to say that!

FRED: Then how do you know that ten years from now that piece of furniture will be worth twice as much as our house?

UNCLE: Because antiques are worth more and more every year.

FRED: Don't they ever stop increasing in value?

UNCLE: No; they always go up.

FRED: Papa used to say that about land in Florida.

UNCLE: What's that?

FRED: Papa said that land in Florida was worth more every year than it was the year before.

UNCLE: Well, what of it?

NEPHEW: Well, nobody would buy Papa's land, and now he's broke.

UNCLE: You talk too much.

CURTAIN

V. ANTIQUES AND REPRODUCTIONS

FATHER (*pointing to a moth-eaten trestle table*) : You must always remember, my child, that the possession of genuine and beautiful antique furniture is refining, educational, gratifying, and a mark of good taste.

LITTLE EDWIN: How do you tell whether an antique is genuine, Papa?

FATHER: You learn a great deal by experience, my child, but sometimes you have to get an expert to tell you. You have to be careful of fakes nowadays.

EDWIN: Can an expert always tell whether something is antique or not?

FATHER: Not always, dear. Sometimes the biggest experts can't agree.

EDWIN: What do you do when the experts don't agree, Papa?

FATHER: In that case you have to believe the ones that think the way you would like to have them think, darling.

EDWIN: Well, is it a mark of good taste, Papa, to have a beautiful piece of antique furniture that you think is genuine, and then to have a lot of experts agree that it is a fake? Would that also be refining and educational?

FATHER: Not so that you could notice it, my

son. That would merely indicate that you had been a sucker.

EDWIN: I think I am dense, Papa, because it seems to me very much more difficult to understand about antiques than to understand about the Greatest Common Divisor and the Least Common Multiple.

FATHER: Not at all, Edwin. What is it that puzzles you?

EDWIN: Well, Papa: you never hear anybody bragging about buying reproductions of antique furniture, do you?

FATHER: No, my child. It is no trick to go into a furniture store and buy a lot of antique reproductions. You do not have to be alert and clever in order to do that. Anybody can do it.

EDWIN: But sometimes the reproductions are well made, are they not, Papa?

FATHER (*savagely*): I'll tell the cock-eyed world they are, my child! If you bury them in a manure pile for a week or two, the way some of the dealers do up in New England, you can't tell them from the originals!

EDWIN: There is a great difference in the price of antiques and reproductions, is there not, Papa?

FATHER (*laughing hoarsely*): I hope to tell you, my child!

EDWIN: Well, Papa; if reproductions are made so well that it's hard to tell them from anti-

ques, I don't understand why antique collectors are always bragging about their antiques. Whenever they buy anything, they go around cackling like a hen that has laid an egg. They wouldn't cackle if they bought a reproduction.

FATHER: You will understand these things better when you grow up, my child. There is a richness and a satisfying quality about a genuine antique that you cannot get in a reproduction.

EDWIN: But if you bury a reproduction in a manure pile for a couple of weeks, the way they do in New England, does it give it a richness and a satisfying quality?

FATHER: Certainly not, my child!

EDWIN: But, Papa, you said you couldn't tell 'em from the originals.

FATHER: Well, Edwin, you mustn't take everything literally. I didn't mean it quite that way.

EDWIN: How did you mean it, Papa?

FATHER: We must see the Chippendale furniture, darling. You haven't seen the Chippendale yet, have you?

EDWIN: What I mean, Papa, is why do people keep on buying antiques when they can get reproductions that are just as good?

FATHER (*angrily*): That's what I'm trying to tell you, Edwin! They *aren't* just as good!

EDWIN: But, Papa! You said——

FATHER (*peremptorily*): Look here, young man! I'm sick of your yap! yap! yap! and your bleat! bleat! bleat! If you want to come along quietly and look at these beautiful antiques and remember what I tell you, you can do so. Otherwise I'll take you home and give you a good hiding!

CURTAIN

VI. WALNUT AND MAHOGANY

UNCLE NAT . . . . . An upholsterer
UNCLE HAL . . . . . A contractor and builder
LITTLE BENNY . . . . . Their nephew
AN OLD LADY . . . . . No relation to anyone

UNCLE NAT (*indicating a scrutoire with broken arch pediment*): You see that secretary, Benny? That's a valuable piece. Pieces shaped like that were almost always made in Virginia, Benny. They used a lot of walnut in Virginia, Benny, and it's one of the purtiest woods there is.

UNCLE HAL (*peering carefully at the scrutoire*): That ain't walnut!

UNCLE NAT (*with an effort at sarcasm*): Oh, ain't it! What might it be, then?

UNCLE HAL: It's mahogany

UNCLE NAT (*placing his nose almost against the wood*): Mahogany your grandmother! That's walnut!

UNCLE HAL: Like hell it's walnut! 'F I ever saw a piece of mahogany, that's it!

UNCLE NAT: Why, you great big so and so, any such and such and such would know that was walnut!

UNCLE HAL: You poor this and that and thus, they ain't such and such chance of it being anything but mahogany!

OLD LADY (*stepping forward briskly and taking* LITTLE BENNY *by the hand*): You come away from here with me, young man, until these gentlemen finish their talk! (*They exit.*)

CURTAIN

Bottlefields

American flasks, bottles and early glassware have long engaged the attention of the most determined and serious-minded of American collectors.

If a collector wishes to engage in dangerous competition with other bottle and glass collectors he must, above all things, be able to match his wits and his vocabulary against theirs.

Professor Kilgallen, being a gentle and kindly scientist, recognized his inability to cope, in language and cold-bloodedness, with expert glass collectors. What he could and did do, however, was to attach himself to a prominent group of glass experts and subject himself to their scurrilities and innuendo in order to assist embryonic glass collectors to an understanding of the mental attitude necessary in successful bottle and glass collecting. His notes, made during his travels with them, are a warning to all would-be bottle hunters who wish to preserve their amiability and their fortunes.

BOTTLEFIELDS

I

It is a fortunate thing for the human race that one's neighbours are not permitted to be judges of one's sanity.

The individual who is addicted to residences that are fluently equipped with towers, cupolas, bay windows, lattices, and fretwork is very apt to shake his head sadly over the person who builds a home that is entirely devoid of porches, jigsaw decorations, false parapets, and other tricky but useless embellishments.

In the same way, the home builder who insists on the Spartan simplicity that lent dignity and beauty to the early residences of New England, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and California is certain that the people who build pousse-café-coloured bungalows with a varied assortment of arches and stained glass are mentally unbalanced.

The resident of New York City is positive that the person who, of his own free will, resides in small and somewhat dimly lighted towns in Maine, Nebraska, Arizona, Louisiana, or any other state, must unquestionably be a little weak in the head. Similarly, the residents of Connecticut, Kansas,

Virginia, Texas and other states know that anybody who is willing to live in New York City is crazy.

The young lady who decorates her face with nonsmudgeable lipstick and tooth-proof rouge and wears only two featherweight bits of lingerie beneath her outer garments, is regarded as being hopelessly demented by the old-fashioned lady who wears her own complexion and eleven undergarments; while the old-fashioned lady is unhesitatingly accused of suffering from a calenture of the brain by her more heavily painted and more sketchily clad sister.

This strange state of affairs persists in every walk of life—in the army, for instance, where a man is considered lacking in brain power for joining the marines, and vice versa; and in wet and dry circles, where the wets think that the drys are monomaniacs, and the drys think that the wets are crazy to drink stuff that is capable of raising ulcers on the inside of a tin can; and among Fundamentalists and Evolutionists; and so on and so forth.

It is particularly persistent and virulent, however, among the rapidly increasing ranks of American collectors, whose numbers have swelled to such proportions in the last few years that nearly everybody is collecting something at large expense. Almost everything, with the possible exceptions of old tin cans, old lobster buoys, and old egg crates,

is being enthusiastically and profitably collected by somebody.

The fact that the person who collects, let us say, old scissors usually regards with pity the individual who collects old iron thumb latches is one of the mysteries of modern life.

It is equally mysterious when the person who travels widely over the countryside in search of iron thumb latches declares unhesitatingly that a brother collector is verging on dementia præcox because of his determination to add other and rarer specimens to his collection of three hundred and seventy-eight pairs of scissors.

To the man who collects Bennington Ware, the man who collects old cuff links is not normal. The man who collects old shaving mugs is well aware of the fact that the man who collects old Windsor chairs is odd, though not necessarily dangerous. The Sheraton sofa addict is regarded as a lunatic by the man who has a penchant for silver lustre, or pewter candlesticks, or wooden sap buckets, or ship models, or birds' eggs, or early fountain pens, or cook books, or first editions, or Pennsylvania Dutch marriage certificates, or old iron fire backs, or early American hair brushes, or any of the countless other things that collectors collect; and the Sheraton sofa collector thinks that the collectors of these other oddities should be rushed with all possible speed to the psychopathic ward.

Such things, of course, should not be. It is all

right, for example, for me to accuse a collector of coloured handkerchiefs or South American humming birds of being crazy; but there is no reason at all why other people should be permitted to call me crazy because I am given to collecting Russian ikons, small pewter measures, and images of Hotei, the Chinese God of Wealth and Contentment.

There should, in short, be more tolerance in the field of collecting and antique hunting.

II

My position as historian of the American Academy for Popularization of Antiques recently brought me a communication from the distinguished Pennsylvania editor, novelist, and collector of rare and beautiful Americana, Mr. George H. Lorimer. Mr. Lorimer stated in effect to Professor Kilgallen—and I trust that I may be pardoned if, in order to promote the cohesion of my notes, I refer to myself in the third person—that he was about to embark on a pleasure trip through those sections of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia which are most fertile in battlefields, early American bottles, and antiques of various sorts.

With him on this pleasure jaunt, stated Mr. Lorimer, would be Mr. Joseph Hergesheimer, the world-famous novelist and specialist on early Americana, and Mr. Edwin Le Fevre, the eminent

author and expert on Wall Street affairs and early Americana. If Professor Kilgallen, whose knowledge of glass was painfully lacking, continued Mr. Lorimer, cared to join this party, he would doubtless find the trip educational as well as of some scientific value, and possibly even downright profitable.

As a result of this communication, a chill gray September dawn found Mr. Lorimer stalking noisily into the apartments of Mr. Le Fevre and Professor Kilgallen in a suburb of Philadelphia and urging them in a cold and pitiless voice to be up and doing.

"And get rid of those suitcases," said Mr. Lorimer with a cold and heartless laugh. "Where do you think you are going? Europe? All you need is another shirt and a razor. Wrap 'em up in a newspaper! I may have to carry a highboy or a painted chest in the automobile, and I won't have any space wasted on suitcases! And hurry up! We've got to meet Hergesheimer over at West Chester in forty-five minutes, and it's thirty-five miles from here!"

By the time that Mr. Hergesheimer had been picked up at West Chester, Messrs. Le Fevre and Kilgallen had finally succeeded in getting their eyes almost open and were ready to converse with the world-famous novelist in a semi-intelligent manner.

"Now, Joe," said Mr. Lorimer to Mr. Her-

gesheimer briskly, "this is going to be a long and important trip and you can't tell where we are going to find some important bottles. Eddie, here, is looking for bottles, and I think——"

Mr. Hergesheimer turned and looked at Mr. Le Fevre in a slightly superior manner. "You collect bottles?" he inquired carelessly.

"Yes," said Mr. Le Fevre anxiously.

"I have the twenty-four best bottles in America," said Mr. Hergesheimer unemotionally.

"I have nearly three thousand bottles," said Mr. Le Fevre without conviction.

"Have you a blue Corn For The World half-pint flask with the D upside down?" asked Mr. Hergesheimer nonchalantly.

"No," said Mr. Le Fevre.

"I've got it," said Mr. Hergesheimer with impressive calm. "Have you got a purple American Eagle pint flask with six claws on the eagle's left foot?"

"No," said Mr. Le Fevre hopelessly.

"I've got it," said Mr. Hergesheimer graciously. "Have you got a pink half-pint flask, unidentified, with a pointed base?"

"No," said Mr. Le Fevre unhappily, "but I have nearly three thousand bottles."

"Have you ever seen one?" persisted Mr. Hergesheimer.

"No," said Mr. Le Fevre.

"I've got one," said Mr. Hergesheimer contentedly.

"I've got an amethyst Jenny Lind bottle with Jenny's eyes crossed," said Mr. Le Fevre.

"It's a sick bottle, isn't it?" asked Mr. Hergesheimer quickly.

"Yes," admitted Mr. Le Fevre reluctantly.

"I know that bottle," said Mr. Hergesheimer scornfully. "It was offered to me, but I won't have a sick bottle. I only have twenty-four bottles, but they are the best bottles in America."

"I have some very fine Pitkin flasks," said Mr. Le Fevre with an ingratiating air. "Sometimes I wish I'd specialized on Pitkins."

"I don't like Pitkins," said Mr. Hergesheimer in a sanctimonious manner. "They leave me cold. I won't have them in my collection."

"Joe," said Mr. Lorimer, who had been waiting impatiently to join in the conversation, "Joe, did I show you the emerald-green Stiegel creamer I got down in Maine for next to nothing?"

"No," said the world-famous novelist with a slight quiver of distaste. "What was it that you started to say about finding some important bottles?"

"Well, what I started to say before you bottle nuts started raving," said Mr. Lorimer venomously, "was that there would probably be some hard feeling if we all rushed into a shop together

and one of us accidentally stumbled on an amethyst three-mould bottle before the others had discovered it. Now my suggestion is that Professor Kilgallen be allowed first choice at the first antique shop that we reach and Le Fevre be allowed the first choice at the second shop, and I'll take first choice at the third shop, and so on. That seems to be the fairest way."

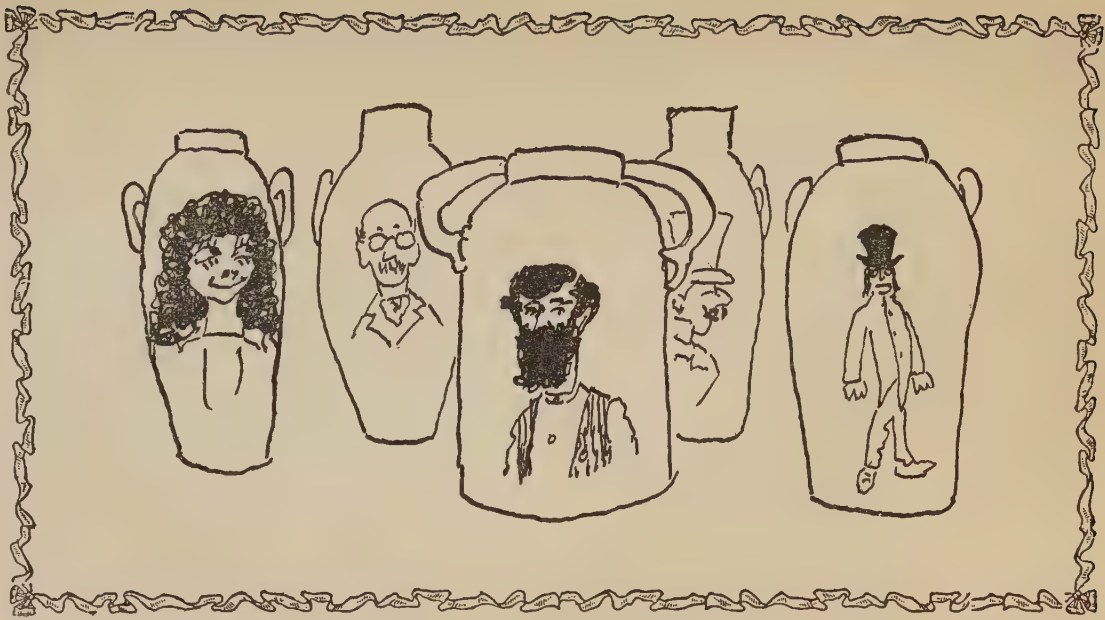
"Oh, yes, indeed!" shouted Mr. Hergesheimer derisively. "That would be lovely! I see myself agreeing to anything like that! You'll put us off at the little shops that haven't got anything, and when it's your turn to stop, you'll stop at the big places and take first whack at a lot of good stuff. I do not trust your ideas of fairness, Lorimer. No, Lorimer, we will all take our chances together. Probably you have written ahead to a lot of these dealers, anyway, and asked them to save their best stuff for you."

"What makes you think that I would do such a thing, Joe?" asked Mr. Lorimer carelessly.

"Well," said Mr. Hergesheimer, "I wrote to a few of them myself, and they replied that they could not save their best things for me because they had promised to save them for you."

III

The atmosphere of helpfulness and perfect trust that thus enveloped the expedition at the outset was suddenly shattered by a long, quavering



Old Idaho Portrait Pottery.
(*Mrs. H. B. Wetherell's Collection*)

howl from Le Fevre, whose keen eyes had detected an Antiques sign attached inconspicuously to a tree in a small Lancaster County village.

Mr. Hergesheimer advised strongly against stopping at this sign, but Mr. Lorimer pointed out to him that Mr. Le Fevre's bottle fever had so gripped him that he suffered the tortures of the damned if prevented from purchasing one or more bottles whenever the opportunity offered. The party accordingly came to a halt and crowded hastily into the shop.

Mr. Lorimer and Mr. Hergesheimer momentarily concentrated their attention on a pie-crust table; and in that moment Mr. Le Fevre, throwing up his head like a hound dog on a fresh scent, vanished silently into the upper reaches of the house.

Mr. Lorimer and Mr. Hergesheimer sensed his disappearance almost immediately, lost all interest in the pie-crust table, and hurried on his trail. His momentary advantage, however, had been sufficient, and he was discovered spread-eagled against the front of a corner cupboard, feverishly pawing over the bottles that it contained.

The mere sight of bottles had uncovered a wholly new side of his character. His customary amiability had been supplanted by a cruel and predatory air. His eyes glittered with an evil light, and his distress at the approach of his compan-

ions nearly caused him to growl and show his teeth.

"What you got in there, Eddie?" asked Mr. Lorimer, vainly trying to peer over Mr. Le Fevre's shoulder.

"Nothing! Nothing!" said Mr. Le Fevre hoarsely, clutching five bottles to his breast and reaching for the sixth.

"Any of 'em any good?" persisted Mr. Lorimer, while Mr. Hergesheimer, by a quick flank movement, succeeded in snatching a wrought-iron whale-oil lamp from the lowest shelf of the corner cupboard.

"No! No!" gasped Mr. Le Fevre, sidling out of the room with the six bottles pressed to his bosom.

But when he had borrowed a fifty-dollar bill from Mr. Lorimer to pay for the bottles and was safely ensconced in the automobile again with the bottles resting in a large cardboard box on his knees, he became garrulous and affectionate once more.

"That was a good haul," said he. "The green eagle bottle is a very rare one. I bet I could get twenty dollars for it to-morrow. The eagle was a new eagle. Absolutely new eagle. Van Rensselaer's bottle book doesn't say anything about that eagle.

"I found a Pike's Peak bottle that I haven't got. I wouldn't have missed it for a million dol-

lars. The prospector on it is walking to the left. I think it is a very important bottle and very much more significant than it would be if the prospector was walking to the right. You see plenty of prospectors walking to the right on Pike's Peak bottles, but it's darned seldom that you see them walking to the left.

"Also I picked up a cornucopia bottle that has a very fine cornucopia. This makes the thirteenth cornucopia bottle that I have. I cannot have too many cornucopia bottles. A person who gets a feeling for cornucopia bottles is never willing to leave one behind him. I wouldn't part with this cornucopia bottle for a lot of money. I bought a cornucopia bottle last year for two dollars and I refused seventy for it a short time ago. I need a cornucopia bottle in cornflower blue. The cornucopia bottle in cornflower blue is a gem of the glass blower's art."

After talking steadily for another ten minutes about his bottles, Mr. Le Fevre drew from his pocket a small greenish-gray book entitled *Check List of Early American Bottles and Flasks* and studied it with all the eager attention of a young lady reading a passionate love letter.

Mr. Hergesheimer and Mr. Lorimer glanced silently but pregnantly at each other and shook their heads ominously.

"It's a disease!" declared Mr. Hergesheimer.

"The brain is no doubt affected," agreed Mr.

Lorimer sadly. "Each week he's a little worse than the preceding week."

"A distressing case," said Mr. Hergesheimer regretfully. "Still, there's nothing basically wrong in his craving for bottles. He simply carries it to unreasonable lengths. Nobody appreciates a good bottle more than I do, but I limit myself to twenty-four—the twenty-four best bottles in America."

"Why, of course," said Mr. Lorimer. "Every well-balanced collector has to have bottles. I have one or two bottles that you haven't seen, Joe, that makes some of your twenty-four best bottles in America look like something that the dog has been playing with. Certainly there's nothing wrong with bottle collecting, but——"

"Lorimer," said Hergesheimer coldly, "what do you mean by that statement?"

"What do I mean by it?" said Lorimer in a gay voice; "why, I mean that I have a pint eagle flask in shaded amethyst with the eagle sitting on a keg, and the motto 'First In the Nation.' "

"There isn't any such flask!" said Mr. Hergesheimer promptly and venomously.

"Is that so!" said Mr. Lorimer, directing a cold glance at Mr. Hergesheimer. "Let me hear you say that, Joe, when you see it nestled among my Stiegel Christmas-tree ornaments."

"Where did you get it, Lorimer?" asked Mr. Hergesheimer in evident distress. "You didn't get it from Sussell! How much did you pay for it?"

"No, Joe," said Mr. Lorimer with an air of perfect contentment, "I didn't get it from Sussell, and it seems to me that a great novelist like yourself, with the delicate sensibilities of an artist, ought to have more delicacy than to ask the price of anything.

"That, however, has nothing to do with the question. What I was saying was that any collector who doesn't want to be accused of being weak in an important branch of collecting must have some good bottles. The true collector must be as strong in silver as in Chippendale or Sheraton, and as strong in china as in silver, and as strong in mirrors as in china, and as strong in bottles as in mirrors, and so on. See what I mean?"

"Sure," said the great novelist morosely.

"Why, certainly!" said Mr. Lorimer petulantly. "You've got to have bottles! What gets me is why people collect postage stamps! That seems to me the lowest form of collecting."

"And Bennington Ware," said Mr. Hergesheimer, brightening perceptibly. "What does anyone want Bennington Ware for?"

"Search me," said the great editor, "I wouldn't have a piece of Bennington Ware in the house, but they go crazy over it. I wouldn't trade one of my diamond-daisy bottles for all the Bennington Ware in the world, would you, Joe?"

"I should say not," said the world-famous novelist. "I wouldn't trade any one of my twenty-

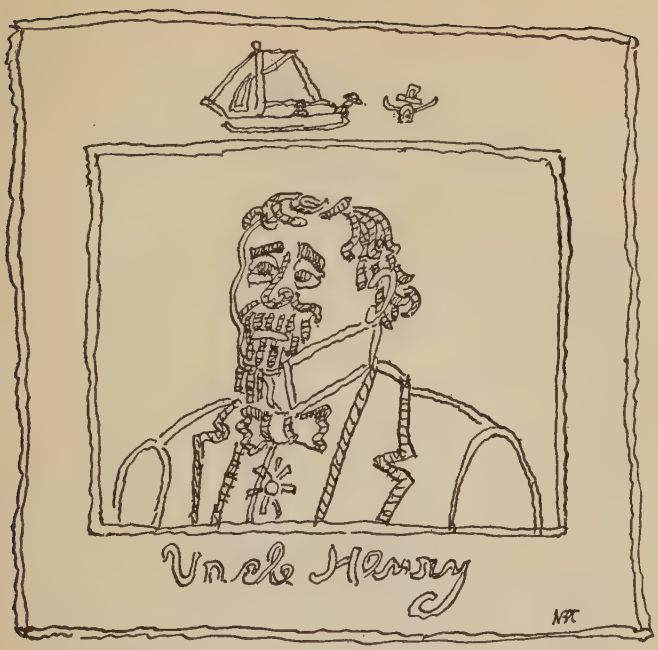
four best bottles in America for all the Bennington Ware I could carry in a limousine. Why, I'd rather have my purple General Taylor bottle than all of the brown cow jugs that the Bennington factory produced!"

IV

While these ardent collectors were thus wholeheartedly condemning the inexcusable collecting fads of other and less enlightened collectors, Mr. Le Fevre had finished his study of the bottle collector's bible, had noted that the automobile was approaching the substantial and picturesque Pennsylvania Dutch city of York, and had carefully stowed his cardboard box full of bottles between his feet, so that he could make an unobstructed dash for any bottles that unexpectedly came within his line of vision.

It was evident to any careful observer that his excitement was noticeably increasing as the automobile drew nearer and nearer to a possible bottle mine. He burst into bottle talk without noticing whether his companions were listening; and his observations grew shriller and shriller with each passing minute.

"If I could only find a Washington and Braddock bottle," said he, "I would be happy. Somewhere there is a Washington and Braddock bottle, but I have never found anybody who has seen it.



Old New England tape-work portrait rug. This is an especially interesting specimen, having been executed, entirely in tape work, by the nieces of the late Capt. H. O. Barley of Cape Neddick, who fell overboard during a fishing party. It was presented to the widow and is still in the possession of her descendants.

"There ought to be plenty of sunburst bottles around here. This ought to be a great country for bottles. It was full of troops during the Civil War, and they must have used all kinds of bottles. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could go back to Civil War times for just a day or two! Think of all the bottles we could get for nothing!

"I found an aquamarine tree bottle for three dollars last year, and I could have sold it for sixty-eight dollars the next day. I wonder where I can get another table to display my new bottles on? I wonder where I can carry all the bottles that I will probably find on this trip? I wonder how many bottles we will take home with us?

"If anyone sees a Lafayette bottle in rich green with a Masonic arch over Lafayette's head and a fleur-de-lis under it, I wish he'd let me have it. If somebody got that bottle first, I think it would make me dangerously sick. It's an unidentified bottle.

"You don't know how I feel about bottles! I love to rub bottles and to hold bottles in my hand! I have nearly three thousand bottles, and by this time next year I hope to have five thousand bottles."

Amid this babble of bottles, the automobile drew up before the antique shop of Mr. Joe Billig; and Mr. Lorimer carelessly prepared to descend from the automobile in such wise that the slack of his heavy overcoat was pressed firmly against

Mr. Le Fevre's mouth, temporarily damming the bottle talk. At Mr. Lorimer's elbow was Mr. Hergesheimer; and the two of them entered Mr. Billig's shop as one man, enunciating the mystic words, "Got any Stoddard three-mould glass?"

Mr. Le Fevre and Professor Kilgallen pressed eagerly on Mr. Lorimer's and Mr. Hergesheimer's heels, respectively piping, "Got any bottles?" and "Got any pewter?"

Three seconds later Mr. Billig's shop was silent except for the heavy breathing of Mr. Le Fevre as he spread himself in a buzzardlike fashion over a table that held several bottles, of Professor Kilgallen as he investigated a number of pewter measures in a dimly lighted corner cupboard, and of Mr. Lorimer and Mr. Hergesheimer as they surreptitiously attempted to wrench a blue glass bowl from each other, at the same time seeking to preserve a careless, nonchalant, and uninterested demeanour.

It should be remarked that although Mr. Lorimer and Mr. Hergesheimer are two of the greatest authorities on American glass, they disagreed disgracefully over each unusual piece of glass with which they were confronted.

"This is unquestionably," Mr. Hergesheimer would say in his most majestic manner, "a blue Jersey christening bowl with a cover—a most unusual piece, Lorimer: a most unusual piece."

"Hm!" Mr. Lorimer would remark, deeply im-

pressed by Mr. Hergesheimer's authoritative tone. "Maybe it is! Maybe it is!"

And with that he would take it away from Mr. Hergesheimer and carry it to the window and examine it more minutely, fondling it in the manner peculiar to glass experts. Finally, having rubbed it against his cheek and applied his tongue to it and otherwise tested it, Mr. Lorimer would issue his pronunciamento.

"You're all wrong, Joe!" he would say with an air of finality. "All wrong! This isn't Jersey at all. This is without doubt Waterford. This is a Waterford finger bowl, Joe, with a cover added. Some workman made that cover, Joe, and took the whole thing home to his wife for a sugar bowl. That's what it is, Joe."

"Is that so?" Joe would ask dubiously, snatching the bowl away from Mr. Lorimer and holding it about three inches from his eyes. "Well, maybe it is! Maybe you're right, Lorimer. Yes, this is Waterford."

"You know what I think?" Mr. Le Fevre would remark cheerfully, having segregated a number of bottles and joyfully purchased them with money borrowed from Professor Kilgallen. "I think it is a piece of modern Bohemian glass."

Mr. Lorimer and Mr. Hergesheimer would immediately make another dive for the bowl and carry it to the window.

"It might be, at that," Mr. Lorimer would re-

mark soberly to the great glass expert, Mr. Hergesheimer.

"Yes," Mr. Hergesheimer would say regretfully to that other distinguished glass fancier, Mr. Lorimer, "yes, I shouldn't wonder at all if he was right!"

V

When the little group of glass experts and bottle hounds departed from Mr. Billig's shop, Mr. Le Fevre was weighted down with nine new bottles, including a puce Washington and Fells Point quart bottle, Professor Kilgallen had accumulated two half-gill pewter measures, Mr. Lorimer was clutching to his bosom a dark blue bowl with three small legs—a very important bowl that was either modern Bohemian, modern German, old Waterford, old South Jersey, old Stiegel, or just old glass; and Mr. Hergesheimer had nothing at all except a slightly discontented look.

"I have got to begin shipping some of my bottles," said Mr. Le Fevre as he climbed gingerly into the automobile, stowed several bottles in his breast pockets, and attempted to place the puce Washington and Fells Point quart bottle in his hat for safe keeping. "If somebody stepped on one of my bottles, the whole trip would be spoiled for me."

"Yes," said Mr. Lorimer. "Get some of those

lousy bottles out of the way, Eddie, so they won't roll against that beautiful blue Jersey bowl of mine and break it."

At this point Mr. Lorimer's angrily rolling eye encountered the two half-gill pewter measures that Professor Kilgallen had purchased and placed on the floor of the automobile.

"Here!" he shouted in offensive tones, "what are those children's cuspidors doing near my Jersey bowl? Get those out of here! Who put them in here, anyway?"

"Mr. Lorimer," protested Professor Kilgallen, "those are not children's cuspidors: those are pewter measures, and very fine pieces of American pewter."

Mr. Lorimer laughed hoarsely and disagreeably. "All right," said he, "all right; have it your own way; but I see no reason at all why anyone should want to collect children's cuspidors. They aren't good for anything, and they certainly aren't beautiful like a piece of glass, and the whole idea of collecting them is crazy; but go ahead and collect them if you want to. The only request I have to make is that you keep them in your pockets, or in some place where they won't damage my glass.

"And now," continued Mr. Lorimer, when the offending pewter had been removed from his sight, "now we can have a little lunch. We've got

to make it snappy, too, because we've got another two hundred and fifty or three hundred miles to go to-day. I'm not hungry: all I want is something light, like a dish of ham and eggs. Now everybody take something that's ready, like sandwiches or ham and eggs, and we'll be well down into Virginia for dinner."

When this thought had been thoroughly impressed on the bottle hunters, they crawled over Eddie's bottles and entered the dining room of the nearest hostelry.

"What'll you have, Joe?" asked Mr. Lorimer. "Ham and eggs or a sandwich? I don't want much of anything. Just ham and eggs will be enough for me."

"I'll have some soft-shelled crabs," said Mr. Hergesheimer.

"So will I," said Eddie.

"Those take twenty minutes," said the polite head waiter.

"We can't wait that long, Joe!" expostulated Mr. Lorimer. "Nobody's hungry, anyway."

"I'll have some soft-shelled crabs," insisted Mr. Hergesheimer.

"So will I," said Eddie.

"Oh, well," said the unhungry Mr. Lorimer, "bring me a good thick steak and some French fried potatoes and a piece of pumpkin pie and several cups of coffee and a piece or two of cheese."

VI

In the course of time the bottle hunters continued onward through the fertile tobacco fields and flourishing farms of Lancaster County, and eventually approached the rolling meadows and wooded ridges of Gettysburg.

"It's pretty hard," said Mr. Le Fevre, holding up his puce Washington and Fells Point quart bottle to the sun and staring raptly at it, "It's pretty hard to ride through these fields without thrilling at the thought of the men who fought and died here in 1865."

"It is indeed!" agreed Professor Kilgallen enthusiastically. "How would it strike you to stop here for a few minutes and get a guide to show us the main features of the battlefield?"

Mr. Lorimer and Mr. Hergesheimer turned slowly toward Professor Kilgallen and transfixed him with hard and unsympathetic stares.

"Battlefield!" said Mr. Lorimer in a penetrative voice. "Battlefield! Do you think we came on this trip to see battlefields? Anybody who wants to see battlefields can get out and walk! We have more important business than looking at battlefields."

"Battlefields!" ejaculated Mr. Hergesheimer, combining in the one word more disgust, distress, aversion, despair, contempt, and general fretful-

ness than he could have compressed into two full-length and internationally acclaimed novels.

Before he could say more, Mr. LeFevre threw out his arm with a strangled cry of "Bottles!" A quick application of the emergency brakes brought the automobile to a sudden stop before the door of an antique shop, and the four travellers struggled eagerly to be first through the door.

Unfortunately the object that had caught the eye of Mr. Le Fevre was a bottle-shaped doll and not a bottle. There were no bottles in the shop, and there were furthermore no specimens of Stoddard three-mould glass, Stiegel glass, Wistarburg glass, Waterford glass, or any other variety of glass.

Consequently, Mr. Lorimer, Mr. Hergesheimer, and Mr. Le Fevre walked abruptly out of the shop and began to call hoarsely and imperiously for Professor Kilgallen, who had discovered a few rare bits of pewter and wished to examine them with some care in the interests of science.

This, it might be casually mentioned, provided an excellent example of collector's intolerance. A collector of old iron hinges, for example, can happily devote two or three hours to brooding and puttering over a heap of rusty iron; but if he is forced to wait fifteen mintues while a collector of Currier & Ives prints examines a number of highly coloured reproductions of burning steam-

boats and moon-faced young ladies with their more intimate underthings dragging down around their boot-tops, his scream of protest will do credit to a stricken panther.

In this particular instance Professor Kilgallen escaped vituperation and vilification by announcing, on rejoining his companions, that he had learned of the existence of an unusually fine bottle field, located in a town through which the bottle hunters had already passed—the town of New Cambridge.

Mr. Deely of New Cambridge, according to Professor Kilgallen's information, owned one of the finest collections of bottles in the eastern United States, including the log cabin Booze bottle, as well as a large assortment of three-mould glass.

Mr. Le Fevre stopped fondling his puce Washington and Fells Point flask, and a crafty gleam came into his large, intelligent eyes. "Maybe," said he breathlessly, "maybe he has a blue Corn For The World bottle!" so saying, he fell into a deep reverie.

Mr. Hergesheimer stared abstractedly into space, and Mr. Lorimer gazed at Professor Kilgallen with an imperturbable and granitelike countenance. Even to an innocent little child, it was apparant that each one of the three distinguished glass experts was driving his powerful brain at top speed in an effort to evolve a scheme

that would enable him to investigate Mr. Deely's collection ahead of the others.

"Well," said Mr. Lorimer, having failed to think of a plan on the spur of the moment, "let's be getting on. We'll stop in to see Mr. Deely when we come back this way to-morrow."

As the sun dropped slowly down the sky, the bottle hunters raced across the upper corner of Maryland and down into the beautiful Shenandoah Valley of Virginia; and as they raced, the King of the Bottle Hunters, Mr. Edwin Le Fevre, prattled endlessly of his obsession.

"This trip would be perfect," said he, holding an amber sunburst bottle to the light and turning it from side to side, "if I could find a blue Corn For The World bottle at Deely's. I have looked everywhere for a blue Corn For The World bottle for the past year, and I wake up nights thinking about that bottle. I have got a white Corn For The World bottle and a brown and three greens and an aquamarine, but I want a blue.

"I would also like very much to get a purple cannon bottle with A Little More Grape Captain Bragg on it. That is a very nice bottle.

"I don't know what I'm going to do about this bottle business if it keeps on interfering with my life. I have had to stop writing stories, because, when I write, I have no time in which to buy bottles. Sometimes I curse the day when I met

the man who started me on bottles. Sometimes I cannot believe that I have been collecting bottles for only a year, and I cannot see how life held any interest for me in the days before I knew about bottles!"

VII

Amid this monologue, punctuated by frequent dips into the pages of *Early American Bottles and Flasks,* the travellers came to the ancient home of the discriminating collector and antique dealer, Dr. Mommsen, who, with his beautiful wife, had scoured the Virginia countryside for rare and inflaming antiques.

The chaste and refined air of the Mommsen home was such as to cause a perceptible air of restraint to envelop Mr. Lorimer and Mr. Hergesheimer. Instead of pushing each other rudely to one side in their customary manner when their eyes fell on a desirable piece, and emitting an occasional insulting remark on the subject of the antiques or of each other's taste, they laid aside their coats and hats and approached the matter delicately and elegantly.

"A charming chair," said Mr. Hergesheimer with an affable smile, indicating a wing chair with ball-and-claw feet.

"A very nice piece," assented Mr. Lorimer amiably, feeling delicately of its knees.

"Yes," said Dr. Mommsen contentedly, "that piece is absolutely right."

"Have you got any bottles?" asked Mr. Le Fevre, who had been restraining himself with difficulty.

"What do you have to get for that chair?" asked Mr. Lorimer, turning up the chair's skirts and examining its remote underpinning with a modest air.

"One thousand dollars," said Dr. Mommsen without a trace of a smile, and with no sign of a quiver in his voice.

"I'll take that chair," said Mr. Lorimer carelessly.*

"Have you got any bottles?" asked Mr. Le Fevre in a less assured voice.

"No bottles," said Dr. Mommsen regretfully, "but I have a nice amethyst Stiegel covered jar seven inches in height."

"Where is it?" asked Mr. Hergesheimer quickly and hoarsely.

On being told that it was in the other room, a stampede of the three glass experts immediately followed. It is probable that trouble might have ensued, had not the beautiful Mrs. Mommsen suddenly appeared. Her presence, fortunately, brought back all the refinement and politeness of the glass experts,and Mr. Lorimer was permitted to get his hands on the Stiegel jar without suf-

**Author's Note:* The chair was subsequently found to be a reproduction.

Portrait from the Kilgallenana of Mrs. A. Atwater Kent.

Portrait study by the celebrated dry-point artist, J. Lambent Dreck, of Professor Kilgallen at the age of eight discovering and preparing to annex his first Stiegel flip glass. His unerring eye discovered fine antiques long before they were recognized as antiques.

fering physical violence at the hands of Mr. Hergesheimer.

"I don't believe it's Stiegel," said Mr. Lorimer, feeling of the pontil mark and rubbing his nose against the side of the jar, and clearly indicating in several small ways that he knew it to be Stiegel.

"It's chipped," said Mr. Hergesheimer, who was looking over Mr. Lorimer's shoulder. "It has a chip an eighth of an inch long,"

"That piece is absolutely right," said Dr. Mommsen with complete assurance.

"What is your price on this bowl?" asked Mr. Lorimer.

"Three hundred dollars," said Dr. Mommsen, looking at his beautiful wife with a basilisk stare, while his beautiful wife looked pensively out of the window at a small, moth-eaten kitten that was playing with a leaf on the lawn in a desultory manner.

On hearing this price, Mr. Le Fevre and Professor Kilgallen left the room and sat near the front door where they could keep an eye on their slightly antique coats and hats.

"It would be worth it if it wasn't chipped," said Mr. Lorimer, replacing the jar on the table and glancing quickly and suspiciously at Dr. and Mrs. Mommsen, whose demeanour remained normal.

Mr. Hergesheimer, smiling his customary gay

smile, at this juncture reached over and picked up the jar and turned his back on Mr. Lorimer in order to examine it.

"However," said Mr. Lorimer quickly, "I'll take it."

Following this Mr. Lorimer hurriedly purchased a table that Mr. Hergesheimer was considering with some seriousness; and in retaliation Mr. Hergesheimer purchased an inlaid Heppelwhite wine cooler that Mr. Lorimer was admiring greatly. Everybody, therefore, was satisfied as the party set off at dusk for Winchester, with the exception of Professor Kilgallen and Mr. Le Fevre.

"No bottles!" complained Mr. Le Fevre contemptuously. "That was a hell of a place!"

VIII

Obeying the exhortations of Mr. Lorimer, the party hastened through its dinner at Winchester, and by half-past eight was on its way to Hallisonburg, Virginia, a mere seventy miles from Winchester and a mere two hundred and ninety miles from the Philadelphia suburb where the trip had started.

On arriving at Hallisonburg, Mr. Lorimer hastened briskly into the antique shop, formerly a grist mill, that had kept open until midnight in expectation of his arrival. Professor Kilgallen, who was in a state of almost complete collapse after fifteen hours of automobiling, pewter hunt-

ing, and listening to bottle conversation, besought the weary Mr. Le Fevre and the dizzy Mr. Hergesheimer to accompany him to a drug store for a revivifying drink of mineral water.

"No! No!" protested Mr. Le Fevre, following unsteadily in the footsteps of Mr. Lorimer, "there might be some bottles in here!"

As for Mr. Hergesheimer, he leaned weakly against the front of the antique shop and sternly waved Professor Kilgallen away. "Bring me some soda mints," he ordered. "I can't let Lorimer go in there alone."

It was nearing the witching hour of 2 A. M. when Mr. Le Fevre emerged triumphantly from the shop holding in his arms a large cardboard box containing eight bottles.

Professor Kilgallen's strictly scientific purchases consisted of a coloured print of the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown and four ancient moulding planes, of the sort that old-time carpenters used for the manufacture of moulding upward of a hundred and fifty years ago.

Mr. Lorimer had purchased and shipped to his home several large pottery pickle jars which, for reasons known only to himself, appealed strongly to his sense of the beautiful.

Even Mr. Hergesheimer was happy, in spite of purchasing nothing; for the soda mints had begun to work.

When all the others had entered the automobile, Professor Kilgallen carefully placed his four wood planes on the top of a large, newspaper-stuffed box and wearily inserted himself among Mr. Le Fevre's bottles. The automobile then lurched off through the silent streets of Hallisonburg in search of the hotel, and all was rest and relaxation, when the early morning quiet of the Virginia countryside was shattered into a thousand pieces by an enraged bellow.

Opening his eyes in horror, Professor Kilgallen found himself staring straight into the contorted face of Mr. Lorimer.

"Take that blankety blanked kindling wood away from my Stiegel jar!" bellowed Mr. Lorimer. Here again may be observed the intolerance of the collector.

"Those," protested Professor Kilgallen with pained dignity, "are not kindling wood! Those are very fine specimens of old wood planes."

"Well, I don't give a such-and-such what they are," roared Mr. Lorimer, "but all I say is get that blankety blanked kindling wood away from my piece of three-hundred-dollar glass or three-hundred-dollar piece of glass or however the so-and-so you say it."

So the wood planes were removed from the glass and held in Professor Kilgallen's lap, and the hotel was eventually reached, and the travellers entered with their arms full of bottles, jars, wood

planes, children's cuspidors, iron lamps, and various other unrecognizable matters.

As Professor Kilgallen stumbled into bed at three o'clock in the morning, after a twenty-four hour day, he heard the voice of Mr. Le Fevre coming over the transom, quoting monotonously from *Early American Bottles and Flasks* in the following words:

"Dutchman Bottle, unidentified: Picture of Dutchman with high hat on the back of his head and stick under his arm. Prominent stomach. Reverse: the following inscription: *'Ick hab's aber immer gesagt: es muss fort gesoffen werden.'* Translation: 'But I've always said so: it must be drunk up.' Pint, aquamarine. Sloping shoulders. Long neck. Sheared mouth. Blubble, blubble, blubble, blubble, blah, blah, blah . . ."

And with that Professor Kilgallen lost consciousness.

IX

Four hours later, as the golden rays of the newly risen sun were illumining the brilliant cornfields of the Shenandoah Valley, green in the cool September morn, Mr. Lorimer again gathered his hollow-eyed little flock around him and spurred them to the day's labours with zest and vivacity.

"Now," said he genially, as he absorbed the final swallow of his third cup of coffee and the last fragments of a large platter of ham and eggs,

"we can't waste any time getting away. We want to get to Deely's in New Cambridge while it's still light, so that we can see the glass. It's over two hundred miles to New Cambridge, so make it snappy. We can't stop for any children's cuspidors to-day, or for any of that blankety blanked kindling wood of Kilgallen's, and Kilgallen's got to keep that blankety blanked kindling wood away from my Stiegel jar."

As Mr. Hergesheimer, Mr. Le Fevre, and Professor Kilgallen wearily followed the vivacious Mr. Lorimer to the automobile, Mr. Le Fevre picked up his bottle song where he had dropped it on the preceding evening.

"One of the bottles I got last night," said he plaintively, "was the extremely rare Van Buren bottle that followed the Jackson bottles. I certainly never expected to find that bottle down here. I have been looking for that bottle ever since I knew anything at all about bottles.

"I didn't expect to find any really rare bottles on this trip, but I must say that I've picked up some very fine bottles. If I could only find a blue Corn For The World bottle at Deely's it would be one of the most successful bottling expeditions that I have ever made."

"So's your old man," observed Mr. Hergesheimer, the internationally famous novelist.

The day having thus started auspiciously, the little group of literati and experts on early

Americana hastened at top speed through the Shenandoah Valley and the beautiful and historic towns of Winchester, Harper's Ferry, and Frederick.

The conversation at Winchester, instead of lingering on Sheridan's famous ride, dealt exclusively with the unutterable folly of collecting Sandwich glass.

At Harper's Ferry the distinguished authors, forgetful of John Brown, were busily engaged in an altercation over the original uses of those bits of Stiegel glass that look like toothpick holders and are known to cognoscenti as Christmas-tree ornaments.

As they passed the clustered spires of Frederick, green-walled by the hills of Maryland, they ignored the memory of the old gray head of Barbara Frietchie and devoted themselves to a disgraceful wrangle over the question of where the first American bottles were manufactured.

But by mid-afternoon, when the automobile again glided past the serried monuments to the heroes of Gettysburg, Mr. Lorimer, Mr. Hergesheimer, and Mr. Le Fevre had fallen silent in order to husband their strength for the approaching battlefield of New Cambridge; while Professor Kilgallen, slightly numbed by the talk of glass and bottles, slumbered heavily and obliviously on the front seat.

There was an air of tenseness about the little

group of glass experts when they finally mounted the steps of the large and imposing Deely home in New Cambridge; and, like a group of distance runners, they poised themselves before the door, ready to spring into the house at the first possible opportunity.

But when the door was opened, they learned to their dismay that Mr. Deely was confined to his bed with illness, and that no loud talking, wrangling, or arguing over prices could be tolerated. Notwithstanding this shock, the glass specialists entered the house and quickly scattered in search of their favourite commodities. Mr. Le Fevre shot a quick glance into every room, and finally scuttled into one in which two tables, a bureau, a wall cupboard, and three desks were heavily cluttered with old bottles. Mr. Hergesheimer and Mr. Lorimer entered another room together, each apparently unwilling to trust the other alone.

Almost immediately Mr. Lorimer and Mr. Hergesheimer fell foul of a corner cupboard in which a number of coloured bottles nestled coyly. Mr. Hergesheimer gave one careful look at the shelves, and then clutched Mr. Lorimer by the arm.

"There it is!" he exclaimed in a dramatic whisper. "There's what Eddie has been hunting during his entire bottle existence. It's a blue Corn For The World, Lorimer! Who'd believe that we'd find a blue Corn For The World! We'll get it;

and when Eddie finds that we've got it, he'll have a seizure! Think of that! A blue Corn For The World!"

"Yes," said Mr. Lorimer ecstatically, "and here's an aquamarine Success To The Railroad bottle and an amethyst eagle bottle! This is going to kill Eddie, Joe!"

"I'll take the blue Corn For The World, Lorimer," said Mr. Hergesheimer, "and you can have the others."

"How do you get that way!" exclaimed the great editor savagely. "You've got the twenty-four best bottles in America, haven't you? What's the matter with me taking it?"

"Not so loud, please," said the young lady in waiting. "Mr. Deely is very ill."

"How much is that blue bottle that this gentleman has in his pocket?" asked Mr. Lorimer in a penetrating whisper.

Mr. Hergesheimer reluctantly produced the bottle, and the young lady in waiting scanned it carefully. "This bottle," said she at length, "has come in since Mr. Deely was taken sick. There is no price on it."

"Can't you ask Mr. Deely?" growled Mr. Lorimer fretfully.

"Oh, I don't think so," replied the young lady regretfully.

"What," asked Mr. Hergesheimer, "is the price of this amber sunburst bottle and the aqua-

marine bottle that my friend is holding under his arm?"

"Both of these," said the young lady, after she had examined both of the bottles in question, "have come in since Mr. Deely was taken ill. You will have to come back when Mr. Deely is better."

"How much is that Sheraton couch?" asked Mr. Lorimer angrily.

"That is not for sale," said the young lady.

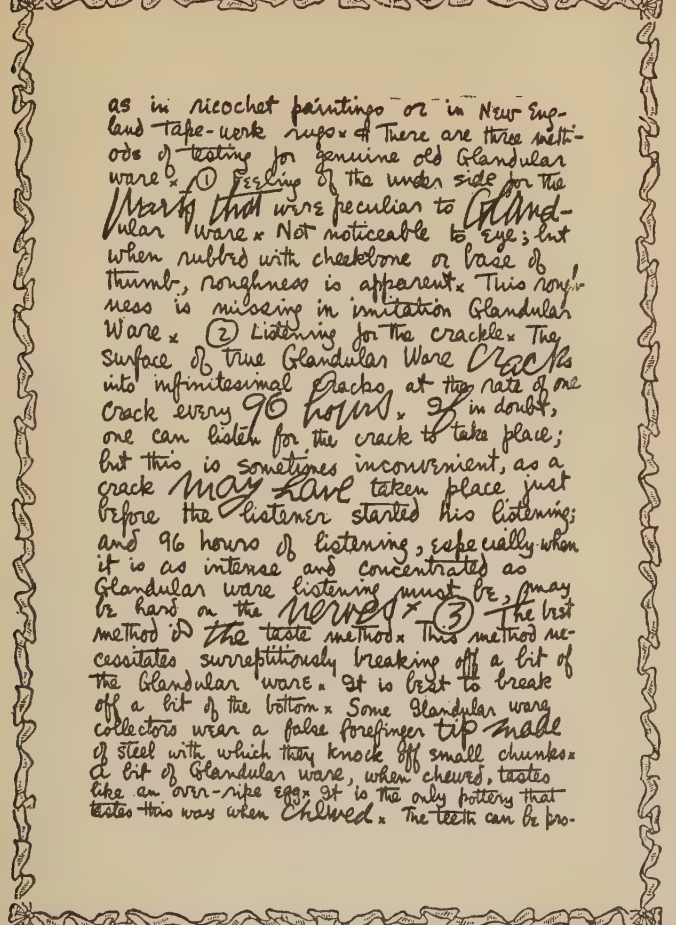
"How much is that Chippendale chair with the Spanish feet?" asked Mr. Hergesheimer hopefully.

"That came in since Mr. Deely was taken ill," said the young lady.

"Such and such and such and such!" whispered Mr. Lorimer and Mr. Hergesheimer under their breaths; and so saying they went back to the automobile, leaving the blue Corn For The World bottle and the amethyst Eagle bottle and the aquamarine Success To The Railroad bottle where they had found them.

X

When Mr. Hergesheimer and Mr. Lorimer were safely out of the way, Professor Kilgallen emerged from a small back room where he had been studying a number of the pewter articles that Mr. Lorimer had contemptuously designated as children's cuspidors, and approached the young lady attendant in a polite manner.


as in ricochet paintings or in New England tape-work rugs. There are three methods of testing for genuine old Glandular ware. (1) Feeling of the under side for the tiny dots that were peculiar to Glandular ware. Not noticeable to eye; but when rubbed with cheekbone or base of thumb, roughness is apparent. This roughness is missing in imitation Glandular Ware. (2) Listening for the crackle. The surface of true Glandular Ware cracks into infinitesimal cracks at the rate of one crack every 96 hours. If in doubt, one can listen for the crack to take place; but this is sometimes inconvenient, as a crack may have taken place just before the listener started his listening; and 96 hours of listening, especially when it is as intense and concentrated as Glandular ware listening must be, may be hard on the nerves. (3) The best method is the taste method. This method necessitates surreptitiously breaking off a bit of the Glandular ware. It is best to break off a bit of the bottom. Some Glandular ware collectors wear a false forefinger tip made of steel with which they knock off small chunks. A bit of Glandular ware, when chewed, tastes like an over-ripe egg. It is the only pottery that tastes this way when chewed. The teeth can be pro-

Specimen page from one of Professor Kilgallen's automobile notebooks. Whenever the automobile hit a bounce, the notes suffered. (This notebook was purchased by Mrs. Edwin A. Stillman for $1285. Connoisseurs now pay much more for a good notebook.)

"I trust," said he, "that Mr. Deely is not dangerously ill."

"No, no," said the young lady, "but we don't like to disturb him unless it's necessary."

"I see," said Professor Kilgallen. "I have been troubled with a weak heart for a long time, and I know how it is. Any sudden disappointment is more than likely to affect my heart, and frequently I faint and remain unconscious for hours at a time. Of course," added the Professor, "it's not dangerous, but sometimes it makes a lot of trouble for the people in whose home I happen to be at the moment."

"That must be very trying," said the young lady.

"You certainly said something," agreed the Professor. With these words he brought out from behind his back two pewter half-gill measures and held them out to the young lady.

"What do you have to get for these?" he asked.

"Why," said the young lady, "these have come in since Mr. Deely was taken ill. I do not——"

Fortunately, at this moment, she noticed that Professor Kilgallen's breath was coming with greater and greater rapidity, and that his hand was pressed against his left side.

"Just a moment," said she hurriedly. "I'll take these up to Mr. Deely and see whether he'll put a price on them."

"Thank you so much," said Professor Kilgal-

len, permitting his breathing to go back to normal, "and when you do so, I wish you'd take up this blue bottle and this lavender bottle and this yellow bottle and ask the price of them as well. Hey, Eddie!"

Mr. Le Fevre at once came running at this summons, with his hands and pockets full of bottles. Consequently, when the young lady in waiting went up to Mr. Deely, she carried not only the two children's cuspidors, but some twelve or fifteen rare and beautiful whisky bottles of such clarity and perfection that the mere discovery of them caused Mr. Le Fevre to hop around like a grasshopper on a hot waffle iron.

A little later, when Mr. Le Fevre and Professor Kilgallen rejoined Mr. Hergesheimer and Mr. Lorimer in the automobile, Mr. Le Fevre carried so many bottles that he could easily have made himself into a portable barroom.

Mr. Hergesheimer was busily engaged in telling Mr. Lorimer all about his ownership of the twenty-four best bottles in America; but the arrival of Mr. Le Fevre caused him to desist and to break into a pleasant smile.

"Well, Eddie," said he, "I suppose you saw that blue Corn For The World. Pretty tough, Eddie, to come all this distance and find a blue Corn For The World that you couldn't get!"

"I got it," said Eddie calmly.

"You got it!" exclaimed Mr. Hergesheimer in

horror-struck tones. "What happened to that amethyst eagle bottle?"

"I got it," said Mr. Le Fevre complacently.

"Well, I'll be so-and-so and so-and-so!" said Mr. Lorimer.

"Yes, indeed!" said Eddie. "I also got the eagle and Dr. Dyott pint bottle that has T. D. W. in the oval instead of T. W. D. They don't come much rarer than that! Oh, yes! And I got an Eagle and Bust of Columbia bottle that will knock you for a loop! That amber sunburst bottle was one of the finest I ever saw, and I got that.

"In fact, I got a lot of bottles in there that are just about the terrier's eyebrows. I got an emerald green Ravenna and Star bottle for three dollars, and a light golden Wheat, Price & Co. bottle with Fair View Works in the reverse that I wouldn't sell for three Chippendale chairs. Oh, yes! And I got the Locomotive bottle in milk glass!"

"Milk glass!"" muttered Mr. Hergesheimer in a trembling voice.

"My aunt!" ejaculated Mr. Lorimer in agonized tones.

Having broken the news of these tremendous and epoch-making discoveries, Mr. Le Fevre unrolled his bottles one by one, caressed them, patted them, and checked them lovingly in his copy of *Early American Bottles and Flasks.*

"What is so sad," asked Mr. Lorimer, when

he had recovered from the shock, "as to see an old friend turn into an incurable bottle drunkard? It wrings my heart to see Eddie go on these bottle debauches, but I know of nothing to do. A year ago he was satisfied with one bottle at a time. Now he cannot be satisfied with less than twenty or thirty bottles at a time. Heaven only knows what the finish will be!"

"It frightens me," admitted Mr. Hergesheimer. "It almost persuades me to sell my twenty-four best bottles in America."

"Not a bad idea, Joe," said Mr. Lorimer, "because if Eddie keeps on at this gait, your bottles won't be the best any more."

XI

The glass experts made a final stop for business purposes at the shop of Mrs. Duckpresser. Inflamed by his recent successes, Mr. Le Fevre abstracted a large green bottle from behind a pile of junk and quickly purchased it for seven dollars. As he was about to wrap it in the conventional newspaper, Mr. Lorimer took it from him and examined it cursorily.

"What is this, Eddie?" he asked.

"A bottle," said Eddie, "a green bottle with lots of bubbles."

"Sure it is!" said Mr. Lorimer coldly, "but what kind of glass is it?"

"I don't know," admitted Eddie.

"Well, you don't want anything that you can't identify," said Mr. Lorimer. "I'll give you eight dollars for it."

"No, I like it and I want it," said Eddie.

At this point Mr. Hergesheimer took the bottle from Mr. Lorimer and peered at it anxiously. "This bottle is no good," said he. "I'll give you nine dollars for it, Eddie."

"No," said Eddie, "I like the shape and feel of that bottle and I'll keep it."

"Now, look here, Eddie," said Mr. Lorimer, "you took that bottle when we weren't looking, and we never had a chance at that bottle."

"That's right," said Mr. Hergesheimer, the great novelist.

"What's more," said Mr. Lorimer, "that bottle is a Wistarburg bottle, and you never knew it at all. You just happened to get your fingers on it, and you are such a crazy fool about bottles that you bought it just because it was a bottle. You don't know anything about glass, and you don't deserve to have any good glass. Now, Joe and I know all about glass, and it's only fair that you should give us a chance at this bottle."

"That's right," said Mr. Hergesheimer, the world-famous author.

"Now, we'll match you for this bottle, Eddie," said Mr. Lorimer.

"I don't see why I should," complained Eddie.

"You know you can trust us, Eddie," said Mr.

Lorimer. "When we tell you that you ought to let us have a chance at this bottle, you can be sure that we are telling you the truth."

So, while Professor Kilgallen unostentatiously picked up another child's cuspidor and a Pennsylvania Dutch pierced tin pie closet, Mr. Lorimer, Mr. Hergesheimer, and Mr. Le Fevre matched three times for Mr. Le Fevre's Wistarburg bottle, and Mr. Le Fevre won all three times. It might be remarked in passing that Mr. Le Fevre's victories, instead of establishing his claim to his own bottle, only succeeded in making Mr. Hergesheimer and Mr. Lorimer more determined to get it away from him—which they doubtless have already done.

And so the more or less happy party sped homeward through the darkness. There were bottles on the floor of the automobile; there were bottles in every overcoat pocket; there were bottles in the laps of every member of the party, including the chauffeur, and Mr. Le Fevre dandled his Wistarburg bottle in his arms. There were bottles stuffed in boxes, there were bottles wrapped in newspapers, there were bottles wrapped in pajamas and handkerchiefs and an old undershirt.

After sixteen hours on the road, the four glass hunters staggered from among the bottles and fell into bed to the music of a deep bass bottle lecture by that distinguished Wall Street specialist and bottle hound, Mr. Edwin Le Fevre.

It was apparent to Professor Kilgallen, as he took a train for his home in Barnacle Cove, Maine, that anyone can collect bottles, but that very few can do so without running grave risk of cracking under the strain.

A Word on Currier & Ives

Wise as was Professor Kilgallen, he was never able to understand the craze for Currier & Ives prints. He strove to see the light, but remained perpetually in the dark. "Those great mysteries of Proverbs," he said—"the way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid—all these mysteries are simple by comparison with the greatest of all mysteries: the way of an antique collector with a Currier & Ives print."

A WORD ON CURRIER & IVES

THERE is a general belief that there is no help for the antique collector who has lost control of himself in the matter of Currier & Ives prints. It is regarded as a matter of course that such a collector, on encountering any sort of print ascribed to N. Currier or to Currier & Ives, loses all sense of proportion and sacrifices his own bank account, to say nothing of the health, well-being, and financial security of his wife and children, in order to add to his already uselessly large collection.

Realizing the large amount of suffering and privation that is caused to great numbers of helpless women and children each year through the passionate intensity with which the heads of their families pursue their search for Currier & Ives prints, I recently experimented with a hopeless victim of the Currier & Ives craze in an effort to find out whether or not there was a cure for his mania. The results of this experiment are here set down for the benefit of the hitherto defenceless victims of these cruel and inexcusable seizures.

Mr. Herbert B. Swimpf of Nutria, Pennsylvania, discovered behind a cradle in the attic of his home, late in 1924, a stack of six Currier &

Ives prints in the original frames. These six prints were (1) Little Charley, the Prize Boy; (2) Howth Castle; (3) The Steamship *Great Eastern;* (4) The Death of Stonewall Jackson; (5) The Great Boston Fire; and (6) A Race on the Mississippi.

The prints were slightly spotted and stained; and at an outside estimate they were worth between twenty-two dollars and twenty-two dollars and seventy-five cents for the lot. The frames were in good condition and were worth approximately seventy-five cents apiece. In the case of Little Charley, the Prize Boy, the print itself was worth less than twenty-five cents, as is the case with a large percentage of Currier & Ives prints; but the frame was mahogany, with a hand-planed pine back in excellent condition, and consequently was worth at least six times as much as the print of Little Charley, the Prize Boy.

Immediately after finding these prints, Mr. Swimpf encountered an article in a magazine which spoke reverently and respectfully of Currier & Ives prints, and implied that their value was high and that any Currier & Ives print would soon be worth at least a hundred dollars. Mr. Swimpf at once visited an antique shop which was displaying the two companion Currier & Ives prints known as The Soldier's Farewell and The Soldier's Return. In the first of these two prints, a lieutenant in the Union army is bidding fare-

well to his young wife and his charming seven-year-old son in order to join his regiment and march away to war. In the second picture, the war is over; and the lieutenant, who has become a captain in his four years of fighting, is returning again to the old homestead. The paint is unfaded on the charming mid-Victorian or pre-Victorian home, the young wife has been unmarred by the passage of the four weary years, and the seven-year-old son—possibly because of a deficiency of thyroid gland—is still seven years old.

Mr. Swimpf obtained these pictures for seven dollars, which was about five dollars more than they were worth; and from that moment his doom was sealed. With constantly increasing frequency he visited antique shops in search of Currier & Ives prints; and whenever he found a print whose price was within his means, he purchased it, regardless of the quality of the print or of the use to which it might be put. Within a comparatively short time he had accumulated such prints as Saratoga Lake, Autumn on the Palumquid River, The Heart of a Rose, Who Killed Cock Robin, The Widow's Mite, An April Shower, The Battle of Higgins' Neck, Winter Scene in Vermont, The Death of Artemus Bendix, Little Mary, Little Katie, Little Annie, The Pride of the Barnyard, A Storm on Lake Erie, and many others of a like nature. Funds were lacking to permit Mr. Swimpf to buy full folios of such prints as The

Ship *Flying Cloud,* The Frigate *Constitution,* Haying Season, and other of the few genuinely valuable prints produced by Currier & Ives; but this fact deterred him not at all in his purchase of nondescript productions of the Currier & Ives shop.

Instead of marketing a number of his cheaper prints and purchasing genuinely good ones with the proceeds, Mr. Swimpf hoarded his cheap prints, concealing them in bureau drawers, in old trunks, and in various out-of-the-way places. With the passage of time he began to indulge in veritable Currier & Ives debauches. Instead of visiting one or two antique shops and then returning penniless with a few prints to his anxious wife and children, as had been his custom at first, he would borrow from his devoted spouse whatever spare moneys might be in her possession and vanish for four or five days at a time.

At such times his poor wife would frequently be obliged to go in search of him, and would invariably find him miles from home in the lowest and most depraved antique shop in the neighbourhood. Unshaven, blear-eyed, and unkempt, he would have lost all track of the passage of time in his attempt to persuade a disreputable antique dealer to reduce his price on Speckled Beauties or The Kitten's Plaything from two dollars to fifty cents.

At the time of my experiment on Mr. Swimpf he was without friends or resources, and was deeply in debt; while his wife and children, half-starved and utterly crushed in spirit, had resigned themselves to an unhappy end. The house was crowded and cluttered with hopelessly mediocre Currier & Ives prints; and among them sat Mr. Swimpf, totally unfitted for any productive labour, mumbling with miserly glee among his prints and assuring his despairing wife that prints for which he had paid seventy-five cents were actually worth seventy-five dollars.

I spoke frankly to Mr. Swimpf on his condition, at which he burst into tears and admitted that he had become the abject slave of this deplorable Currier & Ives habit. He had been offered the very rare Croton & Fusil print, Skating Scene on the Drinking Water Reservoir, for $2.38, but had refused it in spite of the fact that Croton & Fusil prints are infinitely superior to Currier & Ives. This clearly showed him that he was insane on the subject of Currier & Ives. Night after night, he admitted, he would awake bathed in perspiration and resolve to turn over a new leaf on the morrow. Never again, he declared, would he purchase another Currier & Ives: never again would he introduce into his once-happy home a print unfitted by colour, design, or subject to grace a home where any trace of taste or refinement

could be found. Yet on the following day he would again set off on another search for Currier & Ives prints.

He readily agreed to accompany me to the home of Dr. Oswald Remter, the distinguished psychoanalyst, to whom I had already spoken concerning Mr. Swimpf's regrettable condition.

Cleverly putting Mr. Swimpf at his ease by offering to sell him a Currier & Ives print of American Ruffed Grouse for four dollars—an offer which Mr. Swimpf immediately accepted, borrowing from me the requisite four dollars—Dr. Remter gently began to inquire into Mr. Swimpf's past history in an effort to find out the underlying cause for his deplorable weakness.

Not only were Dr. Remter's initial efforts unsuccessful; but succeeding efforts so far failed to elicit the dark spot in Mr. Swimpf's past that for months on end I gave up all hope of being able to solve the mystery or to help the unfortunate man.

Dr. Remter probed deep into Mr. Swimpf's sex life during the years immediately preceding the start of his Currier & Ives fixation, but his most careful questioning failed to elicit any trace of thwarted desires. Mr. Swimpf visited Dr. Remter every day for six months, at the end of which time Mr. Swimpf had bared his sex life from the age of forty-two, when the investigation started, back to the age of twelve. It was

around this time that I began to fear that Dr. Remter was going back to pre-natal days with Mr. Swimpf; but the doctor bade me be of good cheer and declared that the solution of the mystery could not be far off.

At the end of another four months the doctor had taken Mr. Swimpf back to the age of eight; and it was here that a beam of light suddenly shot through the murk. It appeared that at the age of eight Mr. Swimpf had been addicted to a game played with the small photographs which were distributed with packages of cigarettes—photographs of the leading theatrical lights of the day. The owner of a number of these photographs would enter into a game of chance with another possessor of similar cards. Taking up a position some ten or twelve feet from the wall of a house, the contestants would hold one of the photographs between the first and second fingers of their right hands and scale them delicately toward the wall. The boy whose photograph came to rest closest to the wall not only retained his own photograph, but gained possession of the photograph of the other contestant.

In the case of Mr. Swimpf, he possessed a photograph, or cigarette card, which seemed to bear a charmed life. On its face it bore a likeness of the shapely young lady who appeared in the title rôle of the then daring musical play known as The Black Crook—a play in which the leading

actress and a number of subordinates wore black silk fleshings of the sort known as skin tights.

The boyish Mr. Swimpf had cleverly attached bits of paper to the back of this photograph in such wise that its weight had been materially increased; and thus he was able to control its movements with great accuracy. For this reason, and also because his admiration for the subject of the photograph caused him to display unusual care in its manipulation, Mr. Swimpf captured countless numbers of cigarette cards belonging to his boyish playmates without once losing control of his Black Crook card.

One afternoon, however, while engaged in his favourite pursuit of playing cigarette cards, his maiden aunt chanced to pass by the spot where the game was in progress. Stooping quickly over young Swimpf's head in the manner peculiar to maiden aunts, she seized the highly prized Black Crook card and carried it off to the Swimpf home with every sign of disgust and loathing on her maidenly features.

The card was shown to Mr. Swimpf's father and mother, and when young Swimpf returned to his home that evening, he was greeted with the news that his cherished photograph of the lady in skin tights had been thrown into the furnace. He was threatened with various horrible punishments if he should ever again dare to have such obscene pictures in his possession; and by way of hinting

at these punishments, the elder Swimpf led his son into the woodshed and applied a flexible slipper to the seat of his trousers with the eager skill so frequently encountered in the middle 'nineties.

This, then, was the origin of the repression that surged so overwhelmingly to the surface when Mr. Swimpf found himself free to indulge himself in Currier & Ives prints.

Once this discovery had been made, it was an easy matter for Dr. Remter, with all the skill of a trained psychoanalyst at his command, to awaken Mr. Swimpf to the reason for his addiction to Currier & Ives prints. A few more visits sufficed to clear Mr. Swimpf's mind of the dark cloud that had obscured it for so many dreary months. Freed of his obsession, he gladly, at Dr. Remter's suggestion, presented the doctor with all of his Currier & Ives prints by way of showing his gratitude for his release.

Mr. Swimpf, I am glad to say, is again happy and prosperous, and his poor wife, once an object of pity, is now the happiest of wives and mothers.

Dr. Remter has become even more closely allied with me, as he gave up the practice of medicine almost immediately after his successful solution of the Swimpf case and went into the antique business.

An Outline of Antiqueing

"You have to watch them at it," said Professor Kilgallen, rolling up his sleeve and injecting a bit of liquid furniture polish with a slight contortion of his mahogany-coloured features. "They don't want nine tenths of the things they buy; and the persons who buy the cheap things won't be able to endure them for more than three years—unless they have the mentality of a grampus or sea cow."

AN OUTLINE OF ANTIQUEING

(For Dealers and Buyers of a Certain Sort)

PERSONS

GEORGE M. BINSIG, an antique dealer who started in coal, insurance, grain and feed, house wrecking, or what have you.

OSCAR, MR. BINSIG'S furniture restorer, who formerly made buggies.

MRS. EMMA DOBLE, a nut on early pine or anything else as long as it's cheap.

MRS. ALVINA GASPAR, a self-made collector who has been picking up things in the smaller shops for almost a year.

HORTENSE HEMMERING, who rather fancies herself as a spotter of fine pieces.

CHARLES D. HEMMERING, her husband, who pays the bills and accompanies her so that she won't run, as the saying goes, hog wild.

ANSON CRADDOCK, a collector of early Americana with a catholic taste in antiques.

ERNEST F. RINK, a cynical friend of Mr. Craddock. To him a chair is only a chair.

TIME

Four o'clock in the afternoon.

SCENE

The interior of BINSIG'S antique shop, which consists of a large room, R; a medium-sized room, C; and a small room, L. The rooms at the right contain antiques. In the room at

the left OSCAR labours on a table leg with a scraper, a glue pot, and other paraphernalia of the furniture restorer.

The shop's entrance is at the extreme right. All windows should be caked with dust and obscured by shelves on which are a litter of bottles and truck of various sorts. The walls of the two rooms at the right should be covered with Currier & Ives prints of sappy-looking young ladies, wall clocks, portraits that seem to have been executed by a one-armed house painter with a severe tic, and hanging cupboards containing bottles, pewter dishes, jugs, and sundry small bits of bric-à-brac. The floor may be littered with chairs, scrap-iron fragments, small and large tables, chests of drawers, hooked rugs, and a welter of unrecognizable articles so situated that the person who passes among them must step high to keep from accumulating some dirty bruises.

The rising curtain discloses MR. BINSIG peering intently at the table on which OSCAR is labouring in the innermost room—an oval-topped tavern table with legs splayed, in antique patois, in one direction only.

OSCAR (*sourly, as is his custom*): She came back when you was out and raised hell.

MR. BINSIG (*phlegmatically*): That's what everybody's always doing as soon as they begin to get mixed up with antiques.

OSCAR: She said we'd ruined her damned old table.

MR. BINSIG: What's the matter with the damned old table? She wanted it fixed up, didn't she?

OSCAR (*aggrieved*): Sure she wanted it fixed up; and when I fixed it up, she said she

wouldn't take it. She said I'd ruined the damned thing.

MR. BINSIG: You can't ruin a ruin, as the feller says.

OSCAR: The feet were all rotten. You could push a knife blade right into 'em. It wouldn't have stood up if I hadn't put new feet on it, but she says that new feet ruined the damned thing. She says she wanted the old feet on it, but if she'd kept the old feet she'd 'a' had to hang the damned thing up on the wall or something. It wouldn't be any good for a table.

MR. BINSIG (*wearily*): What did she say next?

OSCAR: She said she wouldn't take the damned thing. She said she'd paid seventy-five dollars for it, and you'd have to give her the seventy-five back. My gosh, you'd think these antique collectors was soubrettes or something, the way they rave and rant around when anything don't just suit 'em.

MR. BINSIG (*rubbing his thumb meditatively over a leg of the table*): That ain't a bad table.

OSCAR (*aggrievedly*): Sure it ain't.

MR. BINSIG: I tell you what you do. You get some of that old wood and make a coupla wings for the damned old thing, and fix the top up, and we'll get a nice little butterfly table out of it. Somebody'll pay three hundred dollars for it, I shouldn't wonder.

OSCAR (*hopefully*): Maybe you can sell it to her for three hundred! I'll fix those feet so's you'd never know any new ones had been put on. (*He titters with delighted anticipation.*)

MR. BINSIG (*scratching his head delicately with his middle finger*): You better save those old feet you took off. Maybe we can get another table out of 'em.

(*A bell clangs loudly, announcing the opening of the front door.* MRS. DOBLE *and* MRS. GASPAR *enter, R.*)

OSCAR (*gloomily*): Two more suckers!

(MR. BINSIG *leaves* OSCAR *hurriedly and hastens to the newcomers.* MRS. DOBLE *and* MRS. GASPAR *separate.* MRS. GASPAR *moves with her head well up, examining prints and wall cabinets.* MRS. DOBLE *moves in a semi-stooping position, looking at chests of drawers and table legs.* MRS. DOBLE *moves to the left;* MRS. GASPAR *to the right.*)

MR. BINSIG (*with an air of martyrdom*): Was there anything particular you wanted to see?

MRS. GASPAR (*brightly*): No: we just wanted to look around.

MR. BINSIG (*contorting his face hideously, in the semblance of a smile*): Go right ahead. That's what we're here for, as the feller said.

MRS. DOBLE (*brusquely*): Got any good pine?

MR. BINSIG: Would you be interested in a nice

Sheraton sofa? I got a sofa with the prettiest legs you ever saw.

MRS. GASPAR: No, I don't like that kind of stuff. It's too cold and formal. What I want is nice warm pine. It's so cozy and intimate, sort of.

MR. BINSIG (*cautiously*): What kind of pine would you like?

MRS. DOBLE (*evasively*): Oh, pine chests of drawers or anything like that.

MR. BINSIG: I got some nice boards. Feather edged. All colours. I got the best boards of anyone around.

MRS. DOBLE: My land! What would I want of pine boards!

MR. BINSIG: You have to have a room done in feather-edged boards if you want to make any dent nowadays. You cover the walls with feather-edged boards and hang a Currier & Ives ship picture over the mantelpiece. That's the swellest way to do a room that there is. I could sell all my feather-edged boards to Henry Ford if I wanted to.

MRS. DOBLE (*fretfully*): Well, why don't you? How much are they?

MR. BINSIG (*with no visible emotion*): I have to get from seventy-five cents a square foot up to a dollar and a half a square foot for the specially good ones.

MRS. DOBLE: Let Henry Ford have 'em is what

I say. (*She scrutinizes a small piece of junk some two feet in height, crudely made out of cheap pine boards.*) What's this?

MR. BINSIG: That's a child's blanket chest. Quaint, ain't it?

MRS. DOBLE: I don't think much of it. What's that black stain on the cover?

MR. BINSIG: That's a museum piece, that chest is. That piece ought to be in a museum. It's as quaint a piece as you'd want to see.

MRS. DOBLE: What makes the top of it all black?

MR. BINSIG (*with an air of great candour*): Well, now, I'll tell you, madam: that child's blanket chest is prob'ly a hundred and fifty years old. It's a kind of handy height to set things on, and a lot of things prob'ly got set on it. That's prob'ly where the black come from.

MRS. DOBLE (*impatiently*): Well, how much is it? A thing like that isn't worth a cent over five dollars.

MR. BINSIG (*laughing hoarsely*): Why, I gave twenty dollars for that chest, madam. I can see you know a good piece of pine when you see one, and I'll let you have that chest for twenty-two dollars.

MRS. DOBLE: I'll give you fifteen dollars and not another cent.

MR. BINSIG (*faintly amused*): No, ma'am! This ain't that kind of a place. I'll tell you

what I'll do: I'll give it to you for twenty-one dollars, but I wouldn't make anyone else a price like that. I'd charge anyone else thutty dollars for it, but I'm kind of pressed for cash right now. All I can say is, you bring me another one like it and I'll give you twenty-one dollars for it any day.

MRS. DOBLE: It isn't worth it, and I don't want it. I'll give you eighteen dollars.

MR. BINSIG (*stubbornly*): Twenty-one dollars is the price. I'm expecting a dealer from Boston up to look at that chest to-morrow, and I wouldn't wonder if he paid me thutty dollars for it.

MRS. DOBLE (*reluctantly*): Well, all right, but I don't know what I'll do with it.

(*She rummages in her handbag and produces money, which* MR. BINSIG *vainly attempts to change. He finally seeks assistance from* OSCAR. MRS. GASPAR *hasten up to* MRS. DOBLE *with a Currier & Ives print in one hand, and in the other hand a pewter receptacle shaped like a silk hat.*)

MRS. GASPAR: Did you buy something? What did you buy? Look at what I found, dear. (*She exhibits her discoveries, which are ignored by* MRS. DOBLE).

MRS. DOBLE (*smugly*): I got a little gem, my dear. A child's blanket chest. It's very early pine—one of the type that Henry Ford loves

to buy. A museum piece. It will go beautifully in my living room beside the sleigh seat that I used to keep books on. It's worth twice as much as I paid for it.

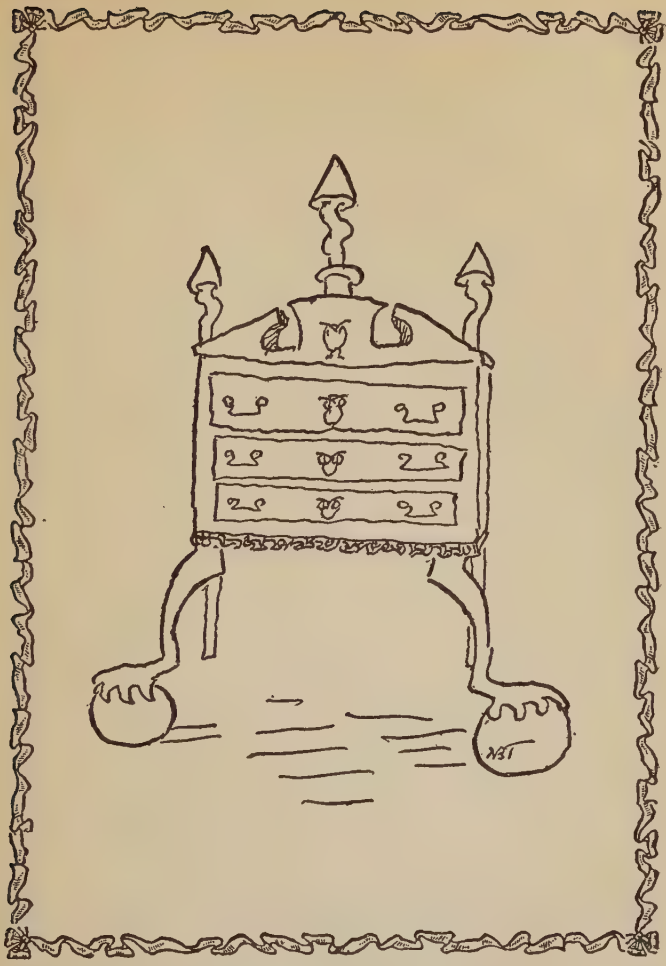
MRS. GASPAR: Just imagine! Won't that be lovely! (*She peers at it more closely.*) I remember there used to be a thing like that in Grandpa's house, only we didn't call it a child's blanket chest. It was to keep shoe brushes and shoe blacking in. It was out in the woodshed, and you'd put your foot up on top of it and spit on the brush and shine your shoes. Yes, and that's what this one is, too, because you can see where the blacking was rubbed into the top. See: that top is all black. Oh, I think that's a lovely little piece!

(MRS. DOBLE *reëxamines her purchase in stunned silence.*)

OSCAR (*changing the bill for* MR. BINSIG *and regarding him with envious admiration*): I certainly got to hand it to you, Mr. Binsig. When you paid a dollar for that yesterday, I thought you'd have it for the next hundred years.

MR. BINSIG (*graciously*): When they're new at it, you can sell 'em anything, as the feller says.

OSCAR (*assaulting his table leg disgustedly*): I guess that's right! If they're buying sleigh seats to put in their living rooms, it won't be



Old spatulate high-boy with cabriole legs and claw-and-ball feet. A fringe of Chinese Chippendale carving has been added at a later date; but the candle-and-snuffer decoration is probably part of the original. Not pure in style but an interesting old piece, none the less.

long before they're buying wagon wheels to hang over their fireplaces. (*He mimics* MR. BINSIG.) That would be real quaint.

(MR. BINSIG *stares at him coldly and then returns to his customers.*)

MRS. GASPAR (*enthusiastically*): Just look at this perfectly ridiculous picture of a little girl burying a pet tomcat. My dear, will you look at the way her step-ins hang down around her boots. That's probably what killed the cat. I'll send it to my daughter on Valentine's Day for a joke, and I'll use this old pewter jar for my dog's drinking water. How much are these, Mr. Binsig?

MR. BINSIG (*benevolently*): Well, the print is twenty dollars and the pewter jar is two hundred.

MRS. GASPAR (*outraged*): Two hundred dollars! You must be crazy! That picture is all covered with fly spots, and nobody but an idiot would want it around. I bet the man that drew it got his art training in a slaughter house. And that pewter bowl is all caked with black stuff that will never come off, and nothing made out of pewter is worth that much money, anyway. I wouldn't pay more than twelve dollars for it.

MR. BINSIG (*indignantly*): That print is an N. Currier, lady—The Departed Playmate. It's in the Currier & Ives book, and I can show

you where it was last sold for thutty-five dollars. That's a rare print, lady. You hang that up over a nice piece of pine with a sprig of flowers under it sticking out of that pewter jar, and it would be real quaint. I oughtn't to sell that print, lady. I'd oughta take it home and hang it up in my parlour where I could look at it and enjoy it, the way I always said I would. And that pewter jar is a genuine commode form. There's a full-page picture of one just like it in Kerfoot's book, with a sprig of bayberries sticking out of it. It's a museum piece, that commode form is.

(MRS. GASPAR *sniffs disgustedly and places the pewter hat on an adjacent table with an emphatic thump. She retains the print of The Departed Playmate and looks at it meditatively from time to time.*)

MR. BINSIG: I'd like to have you look at my Sheraton sofa, lady. You'll go a long way before you see any nicer legs.

MRS. GASPAR: I keep forgetting how you tell the difference between Sheraton and Chippendale. Sheraton had inlay in it, didn't it?

MR. BINSIG (*mopping his brow with his handkerchief*): You can most generally tell by the legs, lady. Sheraton legs were round unless they were square and tapered, and Chippendale legs were square unless they were ball

and claw or cabriole or something, though of course they could be round, too.

MRS. GASPAR: Yes, I knew it was something like that. It's a fascinating study, isn't it? I don't like those Sheraton and Chippendale things, though. They haven't got enough wood to them. I like a nice, heavy sofa with lots of mahogany, and wings on the legs and everything. We've got one in our family over a hundred years old.

MR. BINSIG (*shuddering*): Empire! Lady, you'd ought to have that Currier & Ives print. It's just what you need to go with that sofa.

MRS. GASPAR: I'll give you ten dollars for it.

MR. BINSIG: Lady, that picture cost me fifteen dollars.

(OSCAR, *in the room L, groans heavily and goes to the back door for air.* MR. BINSIG *gazes apprehensively in his direction.*)

Well, I'll let you have it for twelve dollars, just to make a customer out of you.

(MRS. GASPAR *fumbles in her hand bag and produces twelve dollars. The bell, R, rings.*)

OSCAR (*gloomily*): Another sucker.

(*The door R opens and* MRS. HEMMERING *enters briskly, followed by* MR. HEMMERING. MRS. DOBLE *and* MRS. GASPAR *continue their investigation of the shop while* MR. BINSIG

greets MRS. HEMMERING *without enthusiasm.*)

MR. BINSIG: Was there something special you wanted to see, lady?

MRS. HEMMERING (*vaguely*): Oh, we're just looking. Charles, lend me your knife. (MR. HEMMERING *produces a pocket knife; and with it* MRS. HEMMERING *scrapes vigorously at a table top.*) What's this? Cherry?

MR. BINSIG (*sourly*): No ma'am, that's maple, like all table tops on that style of table.

MRS. HEMMERING (*scraping another spot*): I guess it is. (*She returns the knife to* MR. HEMMERING.)

MR. BINSIG (*sternly*): I know it is.

MRS. HEMMERING: I want a serpentine front.

MR. BINSIG (*with relish*): I had a nice serpentine front, but it went yesterday. I've got a nice swell front.

MR. HEMMERING (*apprehensively*): You've got a nice swell front yourself, dear.

MRS. HEMMERING (*defiantly*): I know I have, and you ought to have one, too.

MR. HEMMERING (*peevishly*): I'm satisfied with what I've got.

MRS. HEMMERING (*with assurance*): Some day I'm going to have the finest serpentine front in the United States.

(OSCAR, *galvanized into action, hastens from his room for a glance at* MRS. HEMMERING.)

OSCAR (*disgustedly*): I'll say she is. (*He returns to his table leg.*)

MR. BINSIG: Is your swell front inlaid?

MRS. HEMMERING (*haughtily*): It certainly is.

MR. BINSIG: So's mine. How are your feet?

MRS. HEMMERING: Ogee.

MRS. GASPAR (*prodding* MRS. DOBLE *and casting a dirty look toward the newcomers*): That woman must be a fool to let an antique dealer get so familiar. I got a good mind to make him give me back my twelve dollars that I paid for this picture, though I must say I just adore it. Look, Emma, did you see it? The Departed Playmate is one of the rarest of the Currier & Ives prints. I picked it up for almost nothing. Isn't it sweet?

MRS. DOBLE (*absent-mindedly fingering an old glass dish*): Too sweet for words, Alvina.

MR. BINSIG (*warmingly to* MRS. HEMMERING): Well, you better look at my swell front.

MRS. HEMMERING (*graciously*): I shall be glad to look at it. Come on, Charles, let's look at Mr. Binsig's swell front.

MR. BINSIG (*carelessly*): Of course, it ain't in it with my Sheraton sofa.

MRS. HEMMERING (*struggling for composure*): A Sheraton sofa?

(MR. HEMMERING *groans heavily.*)

MR. BINSIG (*complacently*): This sofa is right! It's a museum piece, this sofa is. It's the kind

of sofa that you can sit on all day and look at the legs of.

(*He leads the way toward the middle room.* MRS. HEMMERING, *following, discovers the pewter hat, clutches* MR. HEMMERING'S *arm convulsively and points at it, then picks it up and carries it.*)

MRS. GASPAR (*in a fever of indignation*): That woman picked up the pewter commode form that I wanted, Emma! The minute that woman came in with her swell front, I knew I wouldn't like her. (*She hastens after* MR. *and* MRS. HEMMERING, *accompanied by* MRS. DOBLE.)

MR. BINSIG (*dramatically removing a chair, two rugs and several pieces of ironmongery from a sofa in the centre room*): There's a sofa that is a sofa. That's what I call a honey.

MRS. HEMMERING (*handing the pewter hat to* MR. HEMMERING): Lend me your knife, Charles. (MR. HEMMERING *produces his knife, and* MRS. HEMMERING *seizes it and scrapes diligently at a leg of the sofa.*)

MR. BINSIG (*anxiously*): Look a little out with that scraping, will you, lady? There's a dealer from New York coming to see that piece to-morrow and I'd like to have a little of the patina left.

MRS. HEMMERING (*with simulated indifference*): What's the sofa worth? (*She takes the*

pewter hat from her husband and scrapes idly at its bottom.)

MR. BINSIG (*rescuing the hat from her in an absent-minded way*): Well, I don't know what it's worth, but I know what I got to get for it, as the feller said. (*He laughs a hyena-like laugh; and* OSCAR *gently puts down his scraper and listens at the doorway.*) I paid one thousand dollars for that piece.

(MR. HEMMERING *unbuttons his coat and fans himself vigorously with his hat.* OSCAR'S *elbow slips off the door jamb, and he narrowly escapes falling to the floor.*)

MRS. HEMMERING (*emphatically*): I wouldn't pay a thousand dollars for that sofa if it was the last piece of furniture in the world and I had to sit on the floor all the rest of my life. How much is it?

MR. BINSIG: I can get sixteen hundred dollars for that sofa from Henry Ford's man whenever I want to.

MRS. HEMMERING (*with ominous calm*): I asked you how much it was.

(MR. HEMMERING *is seized with a fit of shivering.*)

MR. BINSIG: Well, I tell you: that sofa ought to be in a museum or a fine home where nice people can see it and appreciate it. Look at the rake to that back! Look at those acanthus-leaf carvings! Look at those fluted legs!

If you want to feel something nice, just feel those legs! Why, that sofa's worth twenty-five hundred dollars if it's worth a cent.

MRS. HEMMERING (*angrily wrenching the pewter hat from him*): How much is that sofa!

MR. BINSIG: Well, I want to build up a clientele, as the feller said, and I'll let you have that sofa for fifteen hundred dollars.

(OSCAR *breaks his scraper.* MR. HEMMERING *bows his head in his hands.*)

MRS. GASPAR (*mildly, to* MRS. HEMMERING): Could I look at that pewter thing a minute?

MRS. HEMMERING (*ignoring* MRS. GASPAR, *except to hold the pewter hat in the hand furthest removed from her*): Well, that's a nice sofa, but it would be high at seven hundred dollars. It's late Sheraton, and you shouldn't ask such prices for late Sheraton.

MR. BINSIG: All right: you go out and find another like it! That's a test, ain't it?

MRS. HEMMERING (*nonchalantly*): I'll come across plenty like it, and for less money.

MR. BINSIG (*earnestly*): You buy 'em, lady, when you find 'em; and if you don't want 'em when you've bought 'em, I'll take 'em off your hands.

MRS. HEMMERING (*coldly*): What do you want for this piece of pewter?

MR. BINSIG: That piece is a signed piece by Ashabel Gashbill, lady. It's a museum piece,

and one of the quaintest things ever turned out by Ashabel Gashbill. I'd oughta write to the Duponts about that piece, and if they find out I sold it instead of telling them, I may lose their trade, but I'd rather play the game square than be beholden to anybody. Play the game square is my motter; and I guess in the long run that's what'll make you the happiest and bring you the best trade.

(*A faint raspberry is heard from* OSCAR *in the inner room, L.* MR. BINSIG *coughs loudly in an attempt to cover* OSCAR'S *gaucherie, following which he continues hurriedly*:) You come across a piece like that about once every two or three years. It's worth three hundred dollars if it's worth a penny, lady. Ain't it quaint?

MRS. HEMMERING (*witheringly*): You'd probably teach your grandmother to suck eggs! There never was a pewterer named Ashabel Gashbill. You're probably thinking of Ashbill Griswold. I'll give you thirty-five dollars for this piece, and that's five dollars more than it's worth.

MR. BINSIG (*sadly*): Lady, I guess you must have been in Europe for three or four years and kind of lost track of things. Stallings in Portland has got one of these pewter commode forms not half as good as this, and he wants two hundred and fifty dollars for it.

MRS. HEMMERING: Of course he wants two hundred and fifty dollars for it, just the way every farmer in the world wants twenty-five dollars for every five-cent Currier & Ives that he finds behind the old cradles and the horsehair trunks up in the attic, but nobody ever saw me buying a Currier & Ives. I'd just as soon hang an old bustle on my living room walls as a Currier & Ives.

MR. HEMMERING (*by way of supporting his wife*): One hundred per cent.! She said it! The things people buy!

(MR. BINSIG *and the* HEMMERINGS *shake their heads sadly over the folly of others.*)

MRS. HEMMERING: I'll give you fifty dollars for this.

MR. BINSIG (*plaintively*): Lady, I gotta get two hundred dollars for that piece. That's the first commode form in real A No. 1 shape that I've seen for years. You gotta remember those commode forms saw some pretty hard use, lady, and one of 'em in A No. 1 shape is very uncommon. Besides, this lady (*he indicates* MRS. GASPAR, *who is watching* MRS. HEMMERING *with the predatory eyes of a fish-hawk*) was looking at it before you came in, and I think she's waiting for you to make up your mind, though I don't want to hurry you or anything.

MRS. HEMMERING (*after casting a quick and*

suspicious glance at MRS. GASPAR): All right, I'll give you a check. (*Triumphantly*) Now I've got a pair of those commode forms and I can use 'em on the mantelpiece in the living room. That's about the best pair of commode forms in existence, I guess. (*With relish*) I suppose that pair of commode forms would be worth pretty near a thousand dollars, don't you, Charles? You write him a check, Charles. (*She continues her examination of the shop without waiting for an answer from* MR. HEMMERING.)

MRS. GASPAR (*bitterly to* MRS. DOBLE): I could cry to think that I lost that lovely, lovely piece of pewter! Probably I'll never see another one like it! Why didn't you tell me to buy it if you knew so much about antiques?

MRS. DOBLE (*with some spirit*): Well, I like that! I don't know anything about pewter, and I don't want to know anything about pewter. I wouldn't have any pewter in the house—not much of any. These pewter experts make me sort of ill. To hear them tell it, an ugly piece of pewter made by Usherbell Gusherbell or some man that they've heard about is worth twice as much as a beautiful piece made by somebody they never heard about. I think they're crazy, putting commode forms and slop jars and ash cans in

their living rooms. (*Her roving eyes strike a piece of rusty ironmongery under a nearby table, and she leaps at it silently and sinuously.*)

MRS. GASPAR (*startled*): What's that? An old hinge?

MRS. DOBLE (*in a hoarse whisper*): It's a Revolutionary killick, made out of the iron that the farmers mined along the Maine coast during the Revolution. It's the best killick I ever saw! Absolutely flawless!

MRS. GASPAR: What's a killick?

MRS. DOBLE (*gazing at her in pity more than in anger*): A killick is a six-pronged anchor for a small boat.

MRS. GASPAR (*obtusely*): What are you going to do with it? Anchor your dog?

MRS. DOBLE (*irritably*): Certainly I'm not going to anchor my dog with it! Haven't you got any imagination? I'm going to stand it up on its six prongs and have an electric light put on the other end and use it for a reading lamp on the big pine trestle table in my library—the one that I keep all my Sandwich glass on. (*She hastens after* MR. BINSIG.)

(*The bell, R, rings loudly.*)

OSCAR (*morosely*): Another sucker!

(*The door opens and* MR. ANSON CRADDOCK, *clad in a coonskin coat, enters importantly,*

followed in a more leisurely manner by MR. ERNEST RINK.

MR. CRADDOCK, *after a quick glance around the store, hastens directly to a wall cabinet, opens it deftly, and takes out three whisky flasks. He accomplishes the seemingly impossible feat of examining the three flasks and at the same time examining the other bottles on the shelves of the adjacent cabinets. He drops the three flasks in the pocket of his coonskin coat, glances guiltily over his shoulder, and picks another flask from a shelf.*)

MR. CRADDOCK (*singing to himself*): Tum-tum, tum-tum, she wore a yellow ribbon, tum tum tum tum te tum tum, and in the month of May; tum tum tum tum, he asked her why she wore it; she wore it for her lover who was far, far away. (*He looks at the bottom of the flask and at the neck, sides, edges, and shoulders. He holds it above his head and looks through it at the light, and he holds it waist high and lets the light shine down on it. He hefts it, feels it with both hands, sniffs at it, rubs it against his cheek, and snaps it with his finger nail. He also continues his crooning.*) Far away! Far away! She wore it tum te tum tum, who was far, far away! Far away! Far away! Tum te tum tum tum tum who was far, far away! Far away! Far away! Tum te tum——

MR. RINK (*interrupting*): What do you suspect about the bottle?

MR. CRADDOCK: Flask, my boy: not bottle.

MR. RINK: All right, only what are you doing with the bottle? Trying to hatch out another from it? What's wrong with it?

MR. CRADDOCK: This flask is absolutely right, Rink. Amethyst colour—fine! Eagle on a bunch of grapes on one side, surmounting the motto "Help Yourself To the Grape, Captain Bragg." Quart size—lovely.

(MR. RINK *takes the flask from* MR. CRADDOCK *and examines it superficially.*)

MR. RINK: Just another bottle!

MR. CRADDOCK (*taking it back lovingly*): The trouble with you barbarians is that you have no imagination. This flask is a beautiful flask—beautiful in colour, in shape, and in size. It's known as the Help Yourself To The Grape flask. Fits the pocket, the hand, and the face. It is far more decorative than anything made out of curly maple, which is the lowest form of wood, in spite of the large number of collectors who rave about it; and personally I would rather build a room around a nice purple or amethyst flask than around a lousy pine candle stand or a lopsided painting or somebody else's ancestor, the way some of these interior decorators do. This Help Yourself To The

Grape flask is a symbol of earlier, freer, gentler, more artistic days, when the labourer was worthy of his hire, and the insensate rush and jangle and unrest of the jazz age was unknown: of days when the state and the individual stood on its own legs and——

MR. RINK: Would you mind whistling it? I get enough political speeches on the radio. Why don't you buy the bottle and forget it?

MR. BINSIG (*who has freed himself from* MRS. DOBLE *and her killick*): Was there anything particular I could show you?

MR. CRADDOCK: I've been looking at your flasks, Binsig. What do you have to get for this one? (*He hands* BINSIG *the Help Yourself To The Grape flask.*)

MR. BINSIG: I have to get fifty dollars for that flask, mister. It's an amethyst flask.

MR. CRADDOCK (*coldly*): I'm not blind, Binsig. (*He removes the three flasks from his pocket.*) Here's an emerald green Pitkin, an amber sunburst, and a blue Success To The Railroads. Make me a price on the four of them, Binsig, and try to control yourself. You must remember, Binsig, that prices on such things as these flasks were ridiculously high at one time, when Joseph Hergesheimer, the author, was keeping the market fictitiously active by trying to get the twenty-four best flasks in the world. He and Eddie Le

Fevre, the great bottle nut, created the market, Binsig, and now that Hergesheimer has lost his passion for flasks, the bottom has fallen out of the market. You ought to wake up to the economic changes that are taking place, Binsig, or you will find yourself with a lot of junk on your hands, like a horse-car company that wouldn't sell its horses when electric cars came into use, or like an interior decorator that still tries to saw off cheap German ship models on his trusting clients. Now, how much for the four flasks, Binsig? Eight dollars apiece would be about right.

MR. BINSIG: Eighty dollars for the four, mister.

MR. CRADDOCK (*deeply grieved*): I'm sorry you feel that way about it, Binsig. We could probably do a lot of business together if your attitude was more sympathetic, but your prices are a little too rich for my blood. What else have you got in glass? (*He replaces the flasks on their shelves.*)

MR. BINSIG (*sourly*): I've got some nice Sandwich glass.

MR. CRADDOCK (*amiably*): Don't try to kid me, Binsig. Do I look like a person that would buy Sandwich glass? I'm surprised you don't tell me you have some nice glass insulators for telephone poles. Haven't you got any nice three-mould glass? I could use a nice

piece of Waterford or a good Stiegel creamer if the price was right.

MR. BINSIG: I had a nice Stiegel jar, but I sold it yesterday.

MR. CRADDOCK: Are you sure it was Stiegel? There's a lot of phoney stuff coming up from Mexico, Binsig, and a lot of good Czecho-Slovak imitations. How do you tell Stiegel, Binsig?

MR. BINSIG: Why, I tell it the same way you tell it, I suppose. How do you tell it?

MR. CRADDOCK: I have a feeling for glass, Binsig. I can't explain how I tell it; but I tell it, all right. I'm sensitive to glass. That's why I can't bear to have any Sandwich near me. Of course, Sandwich is all right in its place, but its place is in a five-and-ten-cent store.

MRS. DOBLE (*who, with* MRS. GASPAR, *has been listening in on the conversation*): I'd like to know what's the matter with Sandwich glass. I've got ninety-eight pieces of bleeding heart Sandwich, and they're lovely against a piece of black velvet.

MR. CRADDOCK (*condescendingly*): That's a very nice lot of Sandwich, but there are about a hundred million pieces of Sandwich lying around barns and attics. They're thicker than Empire bureaus; and they're about as

rare and valuable as Columbian Exposition half dollars. Now, you take my Stiegel. I've got two amethyst Stiegel creamers and a blue diamond daisy creamer that can't be matched anywhere in the world. If I wanted to sell them, I could probably get five thousand dollars for the three pieces. I keep 'em in a safe, they're so valuable. They're so fragile that they're apt to fall to pieces if they're moved too suddenly from a cold room to a warm room.

(*During* MR. CRADDOCK'S *dissertation* MR. RINK *draws* MR. BINSIG *to one side and confers with him.* MR. RINK *gives* MR. BINSIG *two treasury notes with yellow backs; and* MR. BINSIG, *unperceived by* MR. CRADDOCK, *gets and gives to* MR. RINK *the amethyst Help Yourself To The Grape flask.*)

MR. CRADDOCK (*warming to his subject*): The trouble with Sandwich glass was that it was cheap glass turned out by the carload for cheap trade. The Sandwich factory never made anything like a nice Waterford bowl or a Stoddard bottle. Now, you take my Waterford bowls—I've got some of the finest Waterford bowls in the country—got 'em for a song; and to-day a dozen dealers would cut my throat to get 'em. That's the difference. If you buy Sandwich, you've got nothing but Sandwich, but if you buy Stiegel

or Bristol or Waterford or Wistarburg you've got treasures that make every other collector break down and cry because he can't have them.

MRS. DOBLE (*argumentatively*): Well, I noticed you looked pretty hard at those whisky bottles——

MR. CRADDOCK (*raising his hand in distressed admonition*): Flasks, madam, flasks!

MRS. DOBLE: All right, flasks! You looked pretty hard at 'em; and weren't they cheap glass turned out by the carload for cheap trade?

MR. CRADDOCK: Well, ah, uh (*he clears his throat diligently*), ump, ah, well, those were different.

MRS. DOBLE: Why were they? They were turned out by the thousand, and cheap bums bought whisky in them in barrooms; and the bottles were thrown in with the whisky, too, weren't they? (*She pauses for an answer, but* MR. CRADDOCK *is so busy examining the legs of a small table that he has become oblivious to her presence. Receiving no answer, she resumes triumphantly*) They certainly were, and I'd rather have some nice Sandwich glass than a few nasty old bottles that don't belong anywhere except in the ash barrel. (*Bitterly*) And then some people say that Sandwich glass is no good, and put nasty

old whisky bottles up on their mantelpieces with candles in them.

MR. CRADDOCK (*sotto voce to* MR. RINK): That's the trouble with these amateur collectors. You can't tell 'em anything. They're as sensitive as a lot of fish. (*He moves farther and farther away from* MRS. DOBLE, *who continues to relieve her mind to anyone who cares to listen.*)

MR. DOBLE: Every time I go into an antique place I meet a smart aleck that thinks he knows all about glass and is always asking, "Got any three-mould glass?" and getting all excited when he sees a piece of coloured glass. Show him a blue bottle and he has a fit. Well, why don't some of them buy ink bottles? They're all blue. Take the label off and most of them would think they were getting Worcestersauce glass or Bustle glass or whatever the kinds are that they're always yapping about. Why, I bought a blue china hen dish to hold eggs for three dollars and the next day I was offered twenty-five for it. (*Her voice gradually fades to a peevish rumble and mutter, which continues to erupt and explode at intervals.*)

MRS. HEMMERING (*sympathetically to* MR. CRADDOCK): Those women are really terrible. Quite insensible to the finer side of antique collecting.

MR. CRADDOCK (*gratefully*): Oh, quite. Nice little Heppelwhite table here. (*He points it out to* MR. *and* MRS. HEMMERING, *who peer at it obligingly.*)

MRS. HEMMERING: Yes, only it's Sheraton.

MR. CRADDOCK: No, Heppelwhite.

MRS. HEMMERING: No, Sheraton.

MRS. CRADDOCK (*firmly*): The legs are tapered and inlaid. There is no possibility of its being anything but Heppelwhite.

MRS. HEMMERING (*patiently*): Sheraton used the four-sided tapered leg. There are a lot of them in the American wing of the Metropolitan, and they're marked "Sheraton influence." It's a great mistake to think that all Sheraton legs have to be fluted. I have a very, very beautiful sideboard that has been in my family since 1760, and Sheraton's great-great-great-grandson looked at it and said that it was one of his great-great-great-grandfather's sideboards.

MR. CRADDOCK (*coarsely*): He was nuts. Sheraton was born in 1751, and you can bet he wasn't making sideboards before he was nine years old. I think you must have your dates mixed, as well as your legs. I have the best Heppelwhite sideboard in America, and it has legs just like that table, only better and more graceful.

(MRS. HEMMERING *gives him a dirty look, and he*

passes swiftly into the middle room, followed by MR. RINK.)

MRS. HEMMERING (*angrily to* MR. HEMMERING): Why didn't you say something instead of just standing there like a bump on a log? I just hate to hear anybody bragging about his antiques the way he did! As if anybody cared about his old sideboard! We know just as much about legs as he does, and you should have told him so!

MR. HEMMERING (*defensively*): He seemed pretty sure of his ground.

MRS. HEMMERING: That's right: side with the other person! You're always willing to take anybody else's word on antiques except mine! I declare, sometimes I think I ought to stop trying to make a beautiful home for you and just live in a hotel.

(MR. HEMMERING *brightens perceptibly.*)

MR. CRADDOCK (*stopping in front of the Sheraton sofa*): Binsig, Binsig! Come here a moment!

(MR. BINSIG, *who has been playing among his Sandwich glass with* MRS. DOBLE, *hastens to him.*)

MRS. HEMMERING (*cuttingly*): Now he's found that Sheraton sofa! If it hadn't been for you, I'd have bought that sofa!

MR. CRADDOCK: What do you know about this sofa, Binsig? I see a piece of veneer has

been knocked off the apron and the carving on the back is pretty well chewed up. What's the story on this sofa? The legs are new, aren't they?

MR. BINSIG (*with deep feeling*): Mister, that sofa is absolutely right. There ain't a replacement on it, and if you find one, I'll eat it. Look at the legs on that sofa! Look at the carving! Look at the . . .

MR. CRADDOCK (*getting down on his knees and sticking his head under the sofa*): Do you think you're the only person in the world that can see without assistance? Can you guarantee this sofa, Binsig? It's too bad it isn't in better shape.

MR. BINSIG: I can guarantee that sofa, mister. It belonged in the old Poltice family, and it set out in their woodshed for the last thutty years for the hens to roost on. 'Tain't never been touched, and it's one of the finest pieces ever found in the town of Barnacle, and it's in such good shape that fifty dollars would fix it as good as new.

MR. CRADDOCK (*ripping some upholstery from the back of the sofa and pressing his face to the aperture*): What's the very best you can do on this sofa, Binsig? It's not much of a piece, but I may be able to find room for it.

MR. BINSIG: I've got to get fifteen hundred for that sofa, mister.

MR. RINK: Does that include the amusement tax?

MR. CRADDOCK (*rising and picking sawdust, hay, excelsior, and other foreign matters from his garments*): Pack it and ship it at once, Binsig. Here's a deposit, and I'll mail you a check to-night. (*He rubs his hands together delightedly and smiles on* MR. RINK.) That's a museum piece, Rink. And cheap, Rink, cheap!

MR. RINK: So's land on Fifth Avenue, if you've got the money to pay for it.

MRS. HEMMERING (*to her husband*): Now, look at that! Oh, dear! Isn't that awful! He got that sofa! He must have known that I wanted it! If you hadn't acted the way you did, Charles Hemmering, I'd have had that sofa myself.

MR. HEMMERING (*baffled*): What did I do?

MRS. HEMMERING (*in a rage*): Well, it wasn't so much what you did as what you thought! I could see you thinking, and like a fool I thought I might hurt your feelings if I bought it.

MR. HEMMERING (*plaintively*): You said it was too heavy and too expensive.

MRS. HEMMERING: Oh, shut up!

MR. CRADDOCK (*happily*): Well, Binsig, that sofa was a find, and dirt cheap, too. Now you might get out that Help Yourself To

The Grape flask and see if we can't do business.

MR. BINSIG: Your friend bought that flask, mister. After what you said about Joseph Hergesheimer, I let him have it for thutty-five dollars.

MR. CRADDOCK (*rounding on* MR. RINK): Did you buy that flask? Well, you had a nerve! You don't know anything about flasks or bottles. You never saw a flask before! What's the matter with you, anyway? You don't deserve to have an amethyst flask! I'll give you fifty dollars for it.

MR. RINK: I want it myself.

MR. CRADDOCK: Now, look here, Rink! That flask won't do you any good! You'll just lose it or break it or something. Come on, now: I'll match you to see who gets it.

MR. RINK (*stubbornly*): I can have it without matching, so I won't match. I want it. You said yourself that it was a symbol of earlier, freer, gentler, and more artistic days. That's what I want.

MR. CRADDOCK: Listen, Rink: I ought to have that bottle. It doesn't do you a bit of good. What are you going to do with it, anyway?

MR. RINK (*obviously thoroughly satisfied with himself*): I'm going to put it in the bathroom as a hair-tonic bottle.

MR. CRADDOCK *stares contemptuously at* MR.

RINK, *sneers bitterly, and walks brusquely toward the door, followed by* MR. RINK, *who carries the Help Yourself To The Grape flask, and holds it up occasionally to permit the light to shine through it.*)

MR. RINK (*with a superior air*) : I can't imagine what anyone sees in Sandwich glass!

MR. CRADDOCK (*angrily*) : So's your old man!

(*The bell, R, clangs, and* MR. CRADDOCK *exits, followed by* MR. RINK.)

MRS. HEMMERING (*to* MR. HEMMERING, *abruptly*) : Take that commode form and come ahead!

MR. HEMMERING (*bitterly*) : They called that a pot where I came from.

MRS. HEMMERING (*equally bitterly*) : Call it a cesspool if you want to, but *take* it.

MR. HEMMERING (*more philosophically*) : It's a good thing they didn't make pewter bathtubs. (*The bell, R, clangs and* MRS. HEMMERING *exits, followed by* MR. HEMMERING.)

(*A Stranger appears silently at the back door, L, and makes signals to* OSCAR, *who leaves his table leg and investigates.*)

THE STRANGER (*drawing a blue bottle from his pocket*) : You buy bottles?

OSCAR (*looking furtively over his shoulder to see whether* MR. BINSIG *is in sight*) : What do you want for it?

THE STRANGER: Ten.

OSCAR: Two.

THE STRANGER: Six.

OSCAR: Three.

THE STRANGER: All right. (*He takes three dollars from* OSCAR *and gives him the bottle.*)

MR. BINSIG (*peering into the back room, L,*): What was that?

OSCAR: A friend of mine came down and asked me to give him fifteen dollars for this bottle. You can have it for that if you want it.

MR. BINSIG: I wouldn't have it around if you gave it to me. It's a modern whisky bottle for Old Dynamite Whisky.

MRS. GASPAR (*picking up her Currier & Ives of The Departed Playmate*): I think antiques are so satisfying, dear.

MRS. DOBLE (*clasping her child's blanket chest to her bosom*): You're perfectly safe as long as you only buy what you really like, dear.

(*The bell, R, clangs, and they go out.*)

MR. BINSIG (*moodily*): What a sucker I was to sell that bottle!

(*The noise of* OSCAR'S *leg scraper is punctured by a triple clang from the bell, R. The outer door remains closed, and the curtain falls.*)

The Room in Good Taste

Not many years ago, the man who carried a tennis racquet was regarded as effeminate, and the person who wore golf trousers in the more distant provinces was liable to be stoned.

By 1928, *however, the largest plus-fours in existence were worn by grocery clerks and soda jerkers in Oregon, Arizona, North Carolina, and Maine; and every he-man was supposed to have hysterics if he saw an Empire sofa in too close juxtaposition to a Sheraton card table.*

THE ROOM IN GOOD TASTE

THE height of good taste, in the collection of antique furniture, is achieved by the careful blending of essentially interrelated articles.

There is, no doubt, a certain satisfaction in assembling a number of antiques merely because they are antiques. In many circles it is regarded as permissible, and even as desirable, to place a sleigh seat made in 1850 in a living room beside a Pennsylvania Dutch pie closet made in 1740. There is, to both of these articles, a simple vitality that endears them to the amateur collector. The uses for which they were originally designed are obscured, in his mind, by the fact that both of them are sincere expressions of early and honest craftsmanship.

With the passage of time, however, the collector realizes that the atmosphere of his antiques must be preserved. If he is a connoisseur, he knows that there are some old things that do not go with other old things, no matter how perfect the workmanship on all of them may be. He knows these things automatically. He knows that a well-made old fish horn, no matter how beautiful its lines, cannot best fulfil its destiny by re-

posing beside a well-made old bedpan. If he has a flair for well-made fish horns, he seeks to unearth and purchase, as companion pieces for his fish horns, the articles that will best go with fish horns—articles such as punt anchors, life preservers, oyster knives, early American lobster pots, and old wharf piling with the barnacles intact.

Mr. Willie Dormer of New Bedford, Massachusetts, for example, was the greatest known authority on fish horns in America. Mr. Dormer kept his finest fish horns in a room whose furnishings blended perfectly with fish horns. The room possessed one large bay window. This window was made from a glass-bottomed boat, to obtain which Mr. Dormer made a special trip to the Bermuda Islands. One entire end of Mr. Dormer's fish-horn room was filled with a fireplace whose mantel and sides were made from wharf piling that had been driven into the mud of Gloucester harbour in 1742. Mr. Dormer carefully preserved the barnacles on these piles, even after they had become an integral part of his fish-horn room.

He further demonstrated by means of these barnacled piles, the frequently forgotten fact that a thing which has once been useful remains always useful. He frequently entertained little groups of antique lovers in his fish-horn room, regaling them, on occasion, with welsh rarebit and

other cheesy dishes. On such occasions he invariably grated his cheese on the barnacle-covered piles from which his fireplace was constructed, catching the cheese gratings in an ancient trawl tub dating back to the year of the little herring. It was invariably the consensus of opinion among his guests that the cheese could not have been more appetizingly grated on the finest modern cheese grater.

The spirit of the fish horn was further carried out in Mr. Dormer's fish-horn room by divans made of benches from a fish house. The upholstery was sunk in the apertures originally designed as basins in which the fish were washed; and an air of verisimilitude was added to the whole by placing silvery fish scales on all exposed portions of the wood and preserving them with a triple coat of the finest fish glue covered with varnish.

The doors of this room were made of antique lobster-pot sides, cleverly appliquéd on old pumpkin pine; and the curtains were made of fish nets. Thus the great Dormer collection of fish horns was preserved in surroundings which added to their beauty and blended perfectly with their reason for being.

Similarly, the connoisseur of antiques will never be content to place an early American sleigh seat in a modern living room as a book rack. Once he has acquired a perfect sleigh seat, he will hunt tirelessly until he has acquired a perfect early

American snow shovel, a fine specimen of early American buffalo robe, and a graceful early American sleigh. He will then hang the buffalo robe on the wall, make the sleigh into a bed, turn the snow shovel into a lamp, and utilize the sleigh seat as the nucleus around which the other articles are grouped.

It is, of course, impossible to argue with the amateur collector of early Americana as to the undesirability or incongruity of placing unrelated bits of early Americana together. Such knowledge must come with long experience. The amateur collector, regardless of atmosphere and good taste, persists in placing a Bennington Cow on a Heppelwhite sideboard; and no argument on earth can awaken him to the fact that a Bennington Cow no more belongs with a Heppelwhite sideboard than a Chippendale wig-stand belongs with a pool table.

The collector is not a true collector until his senses are offended by the juxtaposition of a Bennington Cow with anything whose nature does not inherently blend with a Bennington Cow. The true collector, finding a perfect Bennington Cow, at once racks his brain for furnishings that will enhance the cow's beauty and emphasize its original use. If it is a magnificent specimen, he may be unable to rest until he has built a room around it.

The famous Baxter's Dam Corners sampler in which the Colonial ladies took 712,961 stitches. The title is Baxter's Dam Farm Scene.

(*Owned by Mrs. T. H. Pewster of the Corners.*)

He might, for example, use the Bennington Cow as the nucleus for a charming and original card room, as did Almeric G. Bridgework, the celebrated Maryland connoisseur and paint manufacturer.

Having obtained an unrivalled specimen of Bennington Cow, Mr. Bridgework at once embarked on a hunt for a milk stand; for his perfectly developed collector's brain automatically hit upon the milk stand as the one true complement of a Bennington Cow.

When he had unearthed the finest known sample of milk stand in existence, Mr. Bridgework hunted high and low for a piece of furniture that would blend with the milk stand and the Bennington Cow. Dealers attempted to dissuade him from his search; but the collector's instinct drove Mr. Bridgework on and ever on, secure that somewhere there was another article of furniture that belonged with a Bennington Cow and nowhere else.

Like all true and persistent collectors, his search was rewarded. In a far-off Maine village Mr. Bridgework unexpectedly discovered the only perfect example of an early American teat stand —the teat stand being the small table utilized by our early American ancestors to quiet the outcries of calves and sheep whose parents had met untimely ends. Only three teats were missing from

Mr. Bridgework's magnificent teat stand; and as these had doubtless been sucked off by overeager calves or sheep, Mr. Bridgework, with the sentimentality of the true collector, refuses to replace them.

The acquisition of the teat stand caused Mr. Bridgework's brain to develop unexpected activity in the solution of his problem. With almost no delay he sought and procured a beautifully turned three-legged milking stool, three enormous antique clam shells, worn smooth by the hands of the New England farmers' wives who had utilized them to skim the cream from their milk pans, and a beautiful Currier & Ives print of the great Chicago Fire, which was caused by the kicking over of a lantern by Mrs. O'Leary's cow.

Thus Mr. Bridgework furnished a card room original in every respect, and displayed a beautiful collection of early Americana in a manner more sympathetic than any similar specimens had ever before been shown. The teat stand became a card table; the milk stand became a combination smoking table and bar decorated with antique milk bottles full of the finest liquors, cigarette boxes made from cows' horns, ash trays made of cream skimmers, and the peerless Bennington Cow; while the wall decoration was provided with the Currier & Ives of the great Chicago Fire. The walls were finished in skimmed-milk blue, the ceil-

ing was thatched with hay, and the floor was done in cream-coloured tiles. This room alone has assured undying fame to Mr. Bridgework.

Such is the perfection to which only the connoisseur attains.

The Sad Case of Edgar Skipson & The Court Cupboard

Professor Kilgallen was shaking up one of his celebrated furniture-polish cocktails garnished with a tiny ball of floor wax. "When you deal with the representatives of almost any art, business, or profession," said he, chewing thoughtfully on a bit of floor wax, "you know where you are." Then he added another dash of furniture polish to the cocktail shaker and stared at me piercingly from bronze-lustre eyes. "But when you deal with an antique collector," said he bitterly, "you haven't any idea where you stand!"

THE SAD CASE OF EDGAR SKIPSON & THE COURT CUPBOARD

My colleague, Edgar Skipson, who was greatly addicted to antique collecting, always maintained that the day when he bought his court cupboard was the most fortunate day in his life. His judgment was not infallible in the matter of antique furniture, however; and other people must decide whether his judgment in the matter of his good or bad fortune wasn't equally open to criticism.

Skipson, like many other antique collectors, bought antique furniture more because he thought it would eventually be worth more money, rather than for the pleasure that it gave him and the distinction that it added to his home. He was almost unable to resist a Sheraton sofa, for example—not because he needed Sheraton sofas, but because he thought that in another three or five or ten years he would be obliged to pay twice as much for a Sheraton sofa as he paid at the time when he bought it.

For the same reason he was unwilling to pass a Currier & Ives print, no matter how loathsome, without purchasing or attempting to purchase it.

There was no room for Currier & Ives prints in his home, except in the third-floor bathrooms; and most of the Currier & Ives prints that he bought were far too crude in design and colouring to be allowed in a modern bathroom, even of the third-floor variety. Yet he persisted in buying them because of his belief that they would some day increase greatly in value.

This failing, which is not uncommon in amateur—as distinguished from professional—antique circles, would have been supportable had it not been for Skipson's bad habit of buttonholing his friends and telling them of the financial acumen revealed by his antique purchases.

"I got a swell banister-back chair yesterday!" he would exclaim on encountering an acquaintance who wouldn't have been interested if Skipson had got all the banister-back chairs in the world. "It's about the best banister-back chair I ever saw! Swell turnings and Spanish feet! Seven splats on the back! The feller wanted a hundred and fifty for it, but I got him down to a hundred and ten. It's worth two hundred if it's worth a cent! After I'd bought it I told the dealer to go out and get me another one like it and I'd give him a hundred and fifty! I'll bet in another ten years you couldn't buy that chair for three hundred dollars!"

When Skipson, with a proud look, paused for breath, his acquaintance would say, out of politeness, "Is that so! Where did you get it?"

Portrait loaned by Albert O. Besse of Kennebunk, one of the professor's students.

The celebrated race, 1879, between Professor Kilgallen (left) and Fayerweather Tole (losing his hair) for a Savery bonnet-top highboy. The Professor's utter recklessness when on the trail of a genuine antique enabled him to beat Mr. Tole to the home of Mrs. Ettington Bass, where he purchased the highboy for $32.

Immediately Skipson would become mysterious and noncommittal. He never divulged the source of his antiques for fear that some of his friends would go there and buy something that he wanted himself before he had made up his mind that he wanted it.

One afternoon when Skipson was prowling around the premises of the antique dealer who happened to be his pet for the moment, the antique dealer carelessly dropped the remark that old Mrs. Huggins who lived up on the Back Road had a court cupboard, but that the darned old fool wanted two thousand dollars for it, and that there wa'n't anything made out of pine that was wuth that much money.

Skipson, who knew all about court cupboards, though he had never seen one, quietly withdrew from the premises immediately afterward and hastened to his home, where he collected all the spare cash on the premises. He then hastened to the bank and drew out all the money in his account. Immediately thereafter, with fifteen hundred dollars in crisp hundred dollar bills reposing neatly in his breast pocket, he entered his automobile and drove rapidly to the residence of Mrs. Huggins on the Back Road.

A court cupboard, as is well known, was one of the earliest pieces of furniture utilized in early American circles. It was made of pine, and was designed to hold almost everything worth holding

in an early American home, from a few hams to grandmother's spare petticoat. In appearance it faintly resembled the offspring of a peculiarly clumsy sideboard that had enjoyed an affair of the heart with an old-fashioned telephone booth or New England outhouse. It was not, in short, a particularly beautiful piece of furniture; but since most of the early court cupboards were broken up for firewood long ago, an undamaged specimen is rarely encountered, and so is held in high esteem by antique collectors.

When Skipson opened negotiations with Mrs. Huggins, he learned that Mr. Stick of the big Boston antique firm of I. Stick & Company had signified his intention of visiting the Huggins home on the following day to view Mrs. Huggins's court cupboard, and that Mrs. Huggins was planning to ask two thousand dollars for it. Skipson thereupon advised Mrs. Huggins that a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush, and drew from his pocket the neat package of hundred dollar bills. He spread the fifteen hundred dollars before her and advised her feelingly to accept that amount for her court cupboard without further parley. Mrs. Huggins, admitting that she was sorely in need of money, accepted his advice. The fifteen hundred dollars changed hands, and Skipson at once telephoned for a truck and transferred the court cupboard from the Huggins home to his own residence.

On the following afternoon Skipson received a telephone call from Mr. Stick of I. Stick & Company, antique dealers. Mr. Stick expressed himself as being deeply pained that Skipson should have taken advantage of Mrs. Huggins in such an underhanded manner when Stick had announced his intention of visiting the Huggins home on that very day, and of paying two thousand dollars for the court cupboard.

When Skipson expressed himself as being left cold by Mr. Stick's remarks, Mr. Stick offered him two thousand dollars for the court cupboard. Skipson immediately refused the offer, whereupon Mr. Stick offered him twenty-five hundred dollars for it. Skipson, in a state of great excitement and elation, refused the twenty-five hundred dollars, put on his hat, and rushed out to tell all his friends and acquaintances of the remarkable occurrence that had befallen him.

While his excitement was still at fever heat, he received a letter from the curator of a museum in a large Eastern city, stating that word had been received that Mr. Skipson had come into possession of a genuine court cupboard in first-class condition. This being the case, stated the curator, the museum was prepared to pay Mr. Skipson the sum of four thousand dollars for his court cupboard.

On receipt of this letter, Skipson's excitement rose to such a pitch that he became quite unable

to attend to his business. He spent his days as well as his evenings in calling on his friends and his acquaintances and recounting to them every step in the purchase of the court cupboard. It was during this period that he frequently made the assertion that his purchase of the court cupboard was the most fortunate and astute move of his life. He managed to restrain himself, however, when replying to the curator of the museum. Next to himself, he told the curator, he would rather see the court cupboard in the museum's possession; but it was his opinion that it was worth much more than four thousand dollars.

It was around this period that Mrs. Skipson began to experience some difficulty in obtaining from Skipson a sufficient amount of money with which to pay her household accounts; but her mild protests touched no sympathetic chord in Skipson's breast. At some not far distant date, he assured Mrs. Skipson, the court cupboard would bring them untold wealth.

Following Skipson's refusal of the curator's offer, he was again visited by Mr. Stick of I. Stick & Company, antique dealers. After some beating about the bush, Mr. Stick declared that he was sick and tired of being without a court cupboard; and while Skipson's court cupboard wasn't worth it, he was willing to pay five thousand dollars for it.

Skipson refused this offer with seeming calm-

ness; but on that very day his conversation began to be punctuated by nervous giggles which exploded from him at unexpected moments. He took, also, to riding back and forth between Boston and New York and spending all his time in the smoking compartment of the Pullman, telling casual acquaintances about the court cupboard and the successive offers that he had refused.

He was quite unable to speak of anything else while in the company of his friends. Whenever he met an acquaintance on the street, his eyes would be filled with an unnaturally brilliant gleam, and without preface of any sort he would open the conversation by saying, "Say, you know that court cupboard I bought . . ."

His home life, also, suffered severely. His friends and club mates were able to escape him by using speed and ingenuity; but his wife, tied to him by the bonds of wedlock, was unable to get away. He talked about the court cupboard on waking in the morning; and instead of singing in the bathroom, as had been his wont, he shouted plans and speculations concerning the court cupboard through the partly closed door. He talked about it at breakfast; and immediately on returning to his home in the evening he again introduced the subject. He talked of nothing else at dinner or after dinner; and after he had retired for the night, his excited comments on the court cupboard and the possible price that they might some day

get for it continued long after Mrs. Skipson had sunk into an exhausted slumber.

The final blow, so far as Skipson was concerned, came when an antique dealer in Pittsburg wrote to him that he had a client who was furnishing his home in early American pine, and that if he could obtain Mr. Skipson's court cupboard for his client, he would be willing to pay seven thousand dollars for it, though this was far more than its value. It was justified, he added, only because his client was a nut, and a wealthy nut to boot.

When he had read this letter, Skipson burst into a hysterical laugh and laughed without cessation for twelve minutes. At the end of that time, breathless with laughter, he told his wife that if a dealer was willing to pay any such price, the prospective purchaser himself would without doubt be willing to pay ten thousand dollars and even more. Bursting into renewed peals of laughter, Skipson declared that he would advertise the court cupboard in the papers all over the United States. It might, he added, even be worth while to erect a large electric advertising sign on Broadway so that the wealthiest persons in America might learn about the court cupboard. Shaking all over with excitement, he added that on second thought he would never sell the court cupboard in the ordinary way. Instead of that he would approach Henry Ford, whose love for rare antiques

was almost passionate in its intensity. He would, he declared with twitching lips, trade the court cupboard to Henry Ford for one hundred shares of stock in the Ford Motor Company.

Having spoken thus, he burst into an eldritch screech of laughter, and fell to the floor in a fit. When the doctor came and found him picking at the bedspread and demanding that Henry Ford be brought at once to the telephone, he ordered him to the psychopathic ward for observation.

Two weeks later, when Skipson was safely committed to the Womback Hospital for Mental Cases—where he was permitted to give lectures to the other patients on the excessive value attached to the furnishings of his ward—Mrs. Skipson took up the matter of the court cupboard with the Pittsburg antique dealer who had offered seven thousand dollars for it.

The Pittsburg dealer hastened to Mrs. Skipson with a certified check for seven thousand dollars in his pocket; but a careful examination of the court cupboard showed conclusively that it was one of the many Norwegian pieces imported into the United States subsequent to 1920. Although many of the Norwegian pieces cannot be told from early American pieces, except by experts, their value is only a fraction of the value of the American pieces.

Consequently, the Pittsburg dealer went back to Pittsburg with his certified check in his pocket;

and Mrs. Skipson, through the kindness of Mr. Skipson's friends, moved the court cupboard and a few other pieces of furniture into a small apartment and supported herself by selling home-made cake and hooked rugs.

One of the Early Ones

Professor Kilgallen rolled down his sleeve and permitted his daily injection of furniture polish to course revivifyingly through his veins.

"They don't change much," he said at length. "I suppose when Alexander went over into Asia Minor the Syrians stuck him with a lot of phoney tapestries; and of course it goes without saying that whenever Helen visited any of the Trojan dealers, she inevitably came home with a perfectly useless bit of petiterie or whatnot for which she had paid a shocking price."

Having spoken thus, the Professor stared sadly at a Heppelwhite sofa which he had bought for Early English, only to discover that it was late Italian, and prepared another injection.

ONE OF THE EARLY ONES

(An antique shop in old Jerusalem, something less than nineteen hundred years ago. The PROPRIETOR, a dusty-looking man in a snuff-coloured suit, is leaning against an Etruscan vase, indulging in a bit of farrier work with a hand-carved toothpick.

Enter the wife of a Roman civil service official stationed in Jerusalem.)

PROPRIETOR (*gloomily*): Nice weather.

LADY: I want a garden bench: a nice garden bench. Have you got anything in the shape of garden benches?

PROP.: I had a nice garden bench, but I sold it yesterday.

LADY: How much was that bench?

PROP.: Seventy-five sestercii.

LADY: That's about what I want.

PROP.: I sold it yesterday.

LADY: Haven't you got any others?

PROP.: I got a nice fountain. Greek. (*He indicates the fountain.*)

LADY: I haven't got any use for a fountain. How much is this fountain?

PROP.: This is a genuine Praxiteles, lady.

LADY: How do you know it's a Praxiteles?

PROP.: You can't make any mistake about a

Praxiteles when you been in the business as long as I have.

LADY: If it's anything, I'd say it was a Phidias.

PROP. (*with a pained smile*): No, lady. Phidias was good, but he couldn't do ears like Praxiteles. Look at that ear!

LADY: It looks like a Brussels sprout.

PROP. (*distressed*): Lady, you couldn't get a nicer ear than that! That fountain's a museum piece!

LADY: What do you want for it?

PROP.: I got to get five talents silver for that fountain.

LADY (*moving on wearily*): What's this piece of wood?

PROP.: That's a piece of the cross, lady.

LADY (*with some interest*): Not the Jesus Christ cross!

PROP.: Yes'm: that's a piece of the Jesus Christ cross.

LADY: I don't see how it could be the Jesus Christ cross. There are several pieces of it in Rome; and that dealer over near the Temple of Solomon has three of them.

PROP.: They ain't any bigger than a coat hanger.

LADY: I know, but they've been selling pieces of the Jesus Christ cross around here for the last ten years. How big was that cross, anyway?

PROP.: Listen, lady: You couldn't have seen that

crucifixion, because you must have been a little girl when it happened. Ain't it the truth?

LADY (*struggling not to look pleased*): I was going to school in Rome.

PROP.: Sure. Well, I was here when it happened, lady; and I was as close to him as I am to you when he carried it up the hill, and I want to tell you that was one big cross, lady! I give you my word, lady, I'd sooner 'a' carried a piano up that hill than that cross.

LADY (*shaking her head pityingly*): You don't say so!

(*A Stranger enters, clad in a soiled and well-worn toga, but displaying an assured and somewhat wealthy air.*)

PROP.: Yes'm, that was some cross! And as I say, lady, I got a good look at it; and if this ain't a piece of it, I'll eat it!

STRANGER: Another piece of the cross, hey?

PROP. (*defiantly*): Yes, sir: this is a piece of the cross.

STRANGER (*laughing*): How about that big piece that Gordon is offering?

PROP.: Mister, I don't want to say anything about Gordon: live and let live is what I say; but he's a new man here, and he don't care so much about the ethics of the business as I do. Now I been living in this town since Christ was a lance jack, and I worked

up a nice little trade. There wouldn't be any reason for me to lie to you, mister, because I want all my customers to be satisfied.

(*The lady examines the paintings on one or two Greek vases and slowly eases out of the door.*)

STRANGER: Yeah?

PROP.: Yeah!

STRANGER: Well, all I got to say is that there's enough pieces of the cross going around to build a bridge cross the Mediterranean.

PROP.: Yeah, but they ain't the true cross.

STRANGER: Everybody says they are.

PROP.: Listen, mister: I've had prob'ly a hundred fellers come in here in my time trying to sell me pieces of the cross, and in all that time I ain't handled but three pieces, because the others wasn't off the true cross.

STRANGER: How do you know they wasn't?

PROP.: Listen, mister: I had a place over near Pontius Pilate's house when this crucifixion was pulled off, and there wasn't anything stirring that day, so I locked up and went over to watch it. This feller come right up by me, mister, walking slow and having trouble making the grade on account of the size and weight of it, see; so when he come alongside of me, I had a good chance to look at the cross.

STRANGER (*interrupting skeptically*): And you

took particular notice it was made of wood, hey?

PROP. (*seriously*): No, mister: I took particular notice of the grain, and I see it was made of cedar, mister, seeing how I always been interested in wood and painting and so on, on account of my business. You look around, mister, and you'll see some of these pieces of the cross are made out of pitch pine. If that cross had really been made of pitch pine, mister, he'd never 'a' got it up the hill alone.

STRANGER (*noncommittally*): You can't never tell!

PROP (*hastily*): That's a fact, mister: you can't! It certainly beats hell the way people keep talking about that feller and the stuff he done.

STRANGER: You get many calls for pieces of the cross?

PROP.: Listen, mister: I could sell three hundred pieces a year if I had 'em. I been thinking some of splitting up this piece and selling the pieces separate. Maybe there'd be more money in it; but money ain't everything, mister, and the feller that gets this will *get* something.

STRANGER: Would you be willing to guarantee this piece?

PROP.: Mister, I'll give you a written guarantee that this is all that's represented, and if you

ain't satisfied, I'll take it off your hands any time at just what you paid.

STRANGER: What you got to get for this piece?

PROP.: Mister, this piece belongs in a museum. I been in the business for forty-three years, and I ain't never run across a piece of the cross that could touch it. I got to get one hundred gold talents for this piece, mister.

STRANGER: Good-night!

PROP.: Yeah, I know it's a high price; but just you go out and find another piece like it. You been around—for all I know you're a dealer yourself—and you know pieces of the cross don't turn up every day. Not in this shape they don't!

STRANGER: Listen: I'm buying for the Sultan of Turkey . . .

PROP. (*with new interest*): Oh, is that so!

STRANGER: Yeah. Now, look: I'll pay your price, only you got to make your bill out for a hundred and twenty-five, see? Now you treat me right and I'll treat you right, and we'll do a lot of business together.

PROP. (*picking up the piece of the cross and poising it on his shoulder*): Leave it to me, mister! Will you take this with you, or shall I send a boy with it?

STRANGER: I got a chariot right around the corner. Bring it out, will you? (*They go out.*)

CURTAIN

The Bottle Mine

"I have been studying the Stiegel glass situation," said Professor Kilgallen as he meticulously prepared his celebrated furniture-polish cocktails, "and I have come to the conclusion that the histories are all wrong when they say that Baron Stiegel had only a small factory and produced his glass during the space of only a few years."

He carefully added the turpentine, drop by drop, and then shook the mixer briskly. "You can see for yourself," said he, "from the amount of genuine Stiegel in our best antique shops, that the Stiegel factory must have been about the size of a Ford assembly plant, and must have worked on twenty-four hour shifts for at least fifty years. . . ."

THE BOTTLE MINE

ANTIQUE collectors develop strange and sometimes unpleasant traits. Certain forms of antique collecting, furthermore, seem to bring out these traits with unusual virulence. The collecting of curly maple frequently makes a collector wholly unreasonable and irresponsible. The collecting of Currier & Ives prints occasionally brings out his stubbornness and miserly traits. The collecting of pewter is apt to accentuate his indecision and vacillation. The collecting of early pine is likely to develop his intolerance and conceit; while the collecting of fine Chippendale furniture is more apt to bring out his boastfulness and arrogance.

Worst of all, however, in the development of hidden and unsuspected traits, is the collecting of early American glass and bottles. Such collecting, in many cases, works as insidiously on the character of the collector as did the hellish liquors that were so often contained in the bottles.

Why it should be so, I do not know. The fact remains that one can never tell about the bottle specialist. He may be normal as any other collector; and then again, beneath an impassive and

seemingly harmless exterior, there may lurk a relentlessness of purpose and a cruelty that would shock and horrify a Chicago detective sergeant.

Whitney Leet was one of America's greatest bottle specialists. His knowledge of glass was so extensive that he refused to purchase any of the glass known as Stiegel unless he could get it at five-and-ten-cent-store prices, inasmuch as he knew there are nineteen glass factories in existence able to make a grade of glass that Baron Stiegel could not have told from his own products.

In the matter of bottles, however, Leet made no effort to control himself at any time. He frequently travelled halfway across the continent to look at an amethyst or blue whisky flask of unknown origin or unusual design; and from the prices that he occasionally paid for such flasks, one might have thought that they were going to yield a return of 25 per cent. a year for the remainder of his days.

In his home life, he was gentle and kindly; but when he embarked on the trail of a rare flask, he became as hard-boiled and as cunning as a gunman under the influence of opiates.

If a friend or an acquaintance attempted to vie with him in the purchase of a desirable flask, Leet became almost ferocious in his attitude. He never resorted to kicking or biting at such moments, so far as was known; but he had no hesitation in treading heavily on the tender portion of a

foot, or of thrusting himself rudely in front of other people.

I would, however, have suspected him of no greater infraction against good taste and decency if Leet himself had not called me to him early in the spring of 1928 and told me the harrowing tale of Bill Swiggert and the Bottle Mine.

It seems that the late autumn of 1927 had found Leet nervously exhausted from the intensive hunt for early American flasks in which he had indulged during the preceding summer and spring. Instead of hunting leisurely through the countryside, as he had been accustomed to do in his early days of flask hunting, he had been obliged to compete with such energetic newcomers in the field of bottle collecting as Joseph Hergesheimer and Edwin Le Fevre, whose squirrel-like activities had forced him to use high-pressure methods of the most exhausting nature in order to keep abreast of them, to say nothing of occasionally putting himself a jump or two in advance of them.

Haggard and worn by his strenuous toil, Leet determined to banish all thoughts of flasks and bottles from his mind for several months, and to travel to California through the soft warmth of the great Southwest, where the burning rays of the seldom-obscured sun scorch the poisons of fatigue from Eastern bones and brains; and where antiques, in the true sense of the word, are unknown.

Occasionally, in the West and Southwest, Leet knew, one encountered a so-called antique shop. Its stock, Leet had further learned, invariably consisted of the least desirable types of Empire furniture; while post-empire black walnut chairs and sofas, with bunches of grapes carved promiscuously on their frames, were assiduously sought by the so-called antique collectors who lived in those sections.

Consequently, he embarked on his trip secure in the knowledge that he would be tempted to indulge in none of the exhausting hunts for antiques that had made life in more effete sections of America so strenuous and debilitating. As a matter of precaution, however, he carried with him an amethyst Corn For The World flask, so that it could be exhibited as a sample in any section where the need of investigating the flask situation should arise.

Leet travelled by roadster, driving himself and without companions. From Chicago he drove southwest to San Antonio, Texas. He made a perfunctory inquiry for flasks in San Antonio, but found only one repulsive-looking masonic flask in the most offensive brown glass.

He struck the Mexican border at Laredo, and then turned westward into the face of the setting sun, constantly acquiring new strength and vigour from the warm, dry air that blew across the endless seas of mesquite, and resting his shattered

nerves on the flawless and—to Eastern eyes—untravelled roads that carried him ever westward through Eagle Pass, Del Rio, the Big Bend country, and past the barren hills and the towering smelters of El Paso into New Mexico and the purple mountains of southern Arizona.

It was late on a hot December night that his car coasted down the hill slopes of the mining town of Douglas. Parched by his dusty ride, Leet forbore even to stop at the hotel to secure a room, but pressed on another half mile and crossed the border into Agua Prieta to revel in the dry Martinis and the brimming beakers of beer that, for Americans, surround even the most tawdry and dirty of the Mexican border towns with an atmosphere of romance and old-world quaintness.

The Boston Bar and Café, which Leet entered, was entertaining a group of Douglas business men, who had laid down their bridge hands in the Elks Club for a moment, according to their usual after-dinner custom and hastened over to Agua Prieta for their second drink of the evening. Shortly after Leet's entrance they hastened back to their bridge games in the Elks Club; and Leet found himself alone before the bar, except for a single morose individual in flannel shirt and overalls, who gazed gloomily at a bottle of Mexican rye whisky and occasionally helped himself to a drink from it.

In the course of time Leet struck up a conversation with the morose individual by asking his

opinion of the Mexican whisky that he was absorbing. It was, the overalled man said, neither good nor bad: merely drinkable. Leet, though slightly repelled by his gloominess, invited him to dine with him, and the two of them wrestled with a beefsteak that for thickness and toughness—like most of the beefsteaks in the great southwestern cow country—rivalled a sheet of crêpe rubber.

It developed, during the dinner, that the gloomy person's name was Bill Swiggert and that he was a prospector. He had, he revealed, combed through the Huachuca Mountains and the Continental Divide in search of metals of a more or less precious nature until his interior had taken on the character of the country. He came out of the mountains after a prospecting trip, he said, like the Copper Queen of Bisbee—like a big blue hole in the ground: a copper-lined hole. That was why, he explained, he always purchased a bottle of Mexican rye whisky when he entered a Mexican bar for drinking purposes. Anything less would be as devoid of chemical action as spraying a cupful of beef tea into a copper boiler with a perfumery atomizer.

Leet ventured the statement that his road to California led him through the ancient mining section of Arizona: through, in particular, Tombstone. Tombstone, Leet opined, must be a strange and wonderful sight, deserted and redolent of vanished glories.

Mrs. H. B. Wetherell's collection of old Glandular Ware. (Now in Fall River.)

Bill Swiggert remarked that Leet would be surprised. Tombstone, he said, was just like any other place except that the old front of the Birdcage Theatre was still standing. Outside of that, there were just as many people hanging around doing nothing as there were anywhere else in southern California or the Southwest. Everybody had a Chevrolet or a Buick or a Ford; and the high-school girls wore silk stockings and skirts just as short as anywhere else, and bobbed their hair, and gave passing tourists the eye without meaning anything, the way they do in Ohio and Iowa, and so on.

For real spooky sights, Swiggert said, you had to go back into the mountains and look at some of the real deserted camps through which he had travelled and in which he had frequently resided, alone except for his pack mule, for weeks at a time—such camps, for example, as Canned Tomato, Full of Hell, Soak Hollow, Sinful, and Parboil. In some of these camps, declared Swiggert, they must have devoted themselves almost exclusively to drinking, if such remaining signs of human habitation as whisky bottles could be trusted.

At this point Leet excused himself and went to his automobile. From one of the side pockets he took his amethyst Corn For The World flask, wrapped carefully in sheets of cotton batting, and returned with it to Swiggert.

Had Swiggert, asked Leet, unwrapping the bottle as though it were a star sapphire, ever seen anything like that in his wanderings among the deserted mining camps?

Swiggert examined the flask with some care, helped himself to another drink of Mexican rye whisky, and asked Leet what sort of bottle it was. Leet explained that it was one of the early type of American bottles which had been made in great numbers around the time of the Mexican War and the Civil War, as well as earlier in the century. Through breakage, however, they had become scarcer and scarcer, he said; so that good flasks, especially coloured flasks, had become somewhat valuable.

Swiggert essayed the opinion that if they were valuable, he supposed a bottle like Leet's would be worth as much as two or three dollars. Leet, somewhat distressed at having one of his finest flasks undervalued in this way, laughed unpleasantly and said that if Swiggert could buy one for a hundred dollars, he might consider himself lucky.

The flask seemed to hold a strong fascination for Swiggert. He studied it from every side. He wished to know whether a bottle had to have that colour in order to be valuable. A blue bottle or a green bottle, for example: would these colours be valuable? he asked. Leet told him that a blue

bottle was nearly as valuable as an amethyst bottle, but that a green bottle or a brown bottle was not one fifth as valuable as the other colours. A golden yellow colour, however, was moderately valuable; and an aquamarine, or colourless, bottle was worth more than a green or a brown one.

Swiggert then wanted to know about the design on the bottle. Leet's, for example, had a likeness of an ear of corn in the glass, and the words "Corn For The World." For a bottle to be valuable, he wanted to know, did it have to have this design.

It was around this time that Leet awakened to the possibilities in the situation. He knew from long experience that to the average human being a bottle is only a bottle; just as furniture is merely furniture to the person who has never been educated in antiques. The person who knows nothing about antiques can enter a room furnished with the finest Chippendale, Heppelwhite, and Sheraton and see no distinguishing marks about any of the pieces. In the same way, the person whose attention has never before been directed to bottles is unable to distinguish any design that may be blown in the glass, or the colour of the bottle. Frequently he is even blind to its shape, unbelievable as this may seem to the average bottle collector. Consequently, Leet realized that Swiggert had somewhere encountered other whisky flasks, and that he wished to keep his dis-

covery to himself until he knew all about the bottles.

Leet therefore dissembled busily. He dropped his Corn For The World flask into his pocket and said indifferently that for a bottle to be valuable it should have an ear of corn blown in its side. There were, he added with a seeming lack of interest, one or two other designs that gave a bottle a certain value, provided its colour was right. At the moment, he added, he had forgotten what these other designs were.

Swiggert then confirmed Leet's suspicions by asking whether a bottle was any good if it had a train of cars on one side of it. Leet asked with no visible emotion whether the bottle to which he referred was a green bottle or a brown bottle. Swiggert replied that it was a blue bottle. Leet at once displayed the cruelty and relentlessness that had been developed in him by bottle collecting by replying that if this blue bottle merely had a train of cars on it, it was worth two dollars, but that if it had the words "Success To The Railroads" on it, as well, it was only worth seventy-five cents for one bottle or five dollars for a dozen.

After some meditation, Swiggert wished to know whether a large, pot-bellied bottle with a picture of Jenny Lind on it was any good. Leet, who had bought at least forty Jenny Lind bottles at high prices, shook his head regretfully and said

that the shape of these bottles prevented them from having any value. For such a bottle in good shape, with a picture of the glass works and a single star opposite the likeness of Jenny Lind, he admitted that he was willing to pay fifty cents, provided the colour of the bottles was either blue or lavender. For any other colour, he wouldn't pay anything at all, though as a special favour he would be willing to carry away these bottles without charge, provided blue or lavender Corn For The World bottles could be found for him.

Having thus prepared the ground, he told Swiggert that he could see that somewhere, in the surrounding country, there existed bottles that Swiggert had seen. Unless these bottles could be viewed by a bottle expert like himself, they could not be valued, either singly or in the mass. Descriptions by mail or word of mouth, or hearsay evidence, where flasks were concerned, were valueless. If, therefore, Swiggert wished to lead him to the bottles, he would be glad to estimate their value and even to purchase the rights to them at a fair price. If Swiggert did not wish to do this, the bottles would be valueless to him as they were at the present moment.

At these words Swiggert drained the dregs from his bottle of Mexican rye and hurled it to the floor with a morose curse. He would, he said, be at the front door of the hotel at six o'clock on the following morning, and would lead Leet to

the biggest damned mess of bottles that he had ever seen.

Promptly at six o'clock on the following morning Leet was sitting at the wheel of his roadster in front of the hotel in Douglas; and five minutes later, with Swiggert sitting gloomily beside him, they were speeding over the long straight road toward the Continental Divide. They twisted through the tortuous mountain roads leading up to Bisbee, past the mountains that man had removed from their beds of copper and hurled into valleys, and through the rugged and barren cañons of the Divide.

Beyond the Divide they turned toward the jagged peaks of the Huachuca Mountains; and in the course of time, high up among the hills, they came to the gray frame cabins and the deserted false-fronted saloons and gambling halls of the forgotten mining camp of Soak Hollow. Gophers, erect on their tails, watched their progress through the dead town with inquisitive noses held high; and angry marmots hurled themselves beneath the decaying cabins with shrill and outraged whistles.

Swiggert gloomily directed Leet to a small cabin at the far end of Soak Hollow's single street, beyond the warped board front of the Grand Opera House, beyond the Freedom Dance Hall, beyond even the Feed Bag Café, The Hot Breath Saloon, and the Full Up Drink Parlour.

The small cabin straddled a depression in the hillside. When Leet, preceded by Swiggert, poked his head between the doorposts, from which the door hung crazily askew, he saw that there was barely room within for a single wooden bunk, a chair made from a nail keg, and a few bricks on which a small stove had once rested.

Beneath the bunk was a small square hole. Swiggert pointed solemnly to the hole and observed without emotion that the cabin must have once belonged to the town drunkard.

Leet advanced to the hole and peered into it. The owner of the cabin, apparently, had reclined dreamily in his bunk and finished bottle after bottle of early American liquor; and as he had done so, he had dropped early American bottle after early American bottle into the small square hole immediately beneath his numb and careless hand.

Leet could see an aquamarine Pike's Peak bottle reposing on the top of the heap. Several glints of amethyst caught his eye. Deep in the centre of the heap he caught a flash of blue on an unidentified flask.

Swiggert left the cabin and climbed into the depression which the cabin straddled. He reached into the pile of bottles, drew an amber sunburst flask, and held it up to Leet.

"What," asked Swiggert, "is this bottle wuth?"

"That bottle is worthless," replied Leet, who

had paid through the nose for an amber sunburst flask only three weeks before.

With a low curse, Swiggert flipped the bottle away from him, using an underhand flip which carried it far down the gulch and against a large, protuberant rock, where it disintegrated with a musical tinkle.

Swiggert pawed over the pile of bottles once more and drew out an amethyst eagle and Washington flask with the motto "Remember The Cherry Tree."

"My God!" said Leet, who had heard of the existence of this flask but had considered it a rumour on a par with other old wives' tales.

"How's that?" asked Swiggert avariciously.

"I said 'My God,'" replied Leet, "because I thought you were going to take me to some really valuable bottles. Instead of that, you show me flasks like that one!"

"Ain't it a valuable one?" asked Swiggert ferociously. "It's the same colour as yourn!"

"True," admitted Leet, "but the eagle on it spoils it. If it weren't for the eagle, I would be willing to pay ten dollars for it."

Again emitting a foul oath, Swiggert dashed the flask into the gulch before Leet could stop him; and a shower of amethyst glass splintered from the rock against which it landed. Leet, turning the colour of oak ashes, beckoned Swiggert to reënter the cabin.

"Look here, Swiggert," said Leet, when this gloomy guide again stood beside him, "I don't believe I could do much with these bottles; but I'm willing to gamble on them. If you'll give me all the rights in them, and promise to keep your mouth shut about them, I'll give you two hundred dollars for the lot."

"Two hundred dollars ain't enough!" declared Swiggert malevolently. "I've been around in my time, and I know a thing or two. Oh, I seen your face turn pale when I busted that last bottle. Them bottles are wuth a thousand dollars if they're wuth a cent!"

"All right, Swiggert," said Leet desperately. "I'll give you a thousand dollars for them."

"You bet you will," said Swiggert offensively, "and you'll take me East with you while you sell 'em, and you'll give me twenty-five per cent. of all the money over a thousand dollars that you make when you sell 'em."

"My heavens, Swiggert! I can't do that!" protested Leet. "If I sold those bottles all at one time, I'd break the bottle market all to pieces. Why, if I sold those all at once, you'd be able to buy amethyst flasks for ten dollars!"

"Oh, is that so!" said Swiggert with a malevolent laugh. "I guess those bottles ain't so wuthless after all. That being the case, I ain't a-going to sell 'em. No, sir! I'm a-going to take 'em East myself and sell 'em!"

At these words, said Leet, he became very cold and calm. "Are those your final words, Swiggert?" he asked deliberately.

"I'll say so!" ejaculated Swiggert coarsely.

In the twinkling of an eye, said Leet, all of his long, happy antiqueing expeditions swept across his brain. Should he, he asked himself, permit all his past pleasures to be set at naught by this ignorant man? Should he permit the pride of bottle collectors all over America to be dashed into the dust through the headstrong act of an unschooled and reckless prospector? He thought of his eighteen Pitkin flasks. He thought of his amethyst Dr. Dyott and cross-eyed bartender amethyst flask. He thought of Joe Hergesheimer's twenty-four best bottles in America. All the bottle lore of a lifetime flashed through his mind.

Without another word, Leet reached into the side pocket of his well-worn tweed jacket, drew out an automatic pistol and shot Swiggert through the heart. With a deft movement he caught the body as it fell and guided it so that it fell through the hole in the floor and slipped, with a musical tinkle of breaking glass, to the bottom of the pile of bottles.

A moment later he was kneeling beside the body. Having assured himself that life was extinct, he hastily selected a few of the finer flasks from the pile—five amethysts, six blues, two golds, and a jade green. Then, with deft hands, he concealed

the body beneath the bottles; and fifteen minutes later he was on his way to California with his newly acquired bottles safely tucked into the pockets of his automobile, and with a song of thanksgiving in his heart.

Leet felt, he said, that he must tell somebody about the whole affair; and so he told me. What, he asked, should he do about it?

I thought of my dark blue Pike's Peak or Bust bottle. I thought of my amethyst A Little More Grape Captain Bragg. I thought of my twelve-dollar jade-green Pitkin flask. I thought of my aquamarine Jenny Lind with star and glass works. How, in view of all these, could I give him an unbiassed opinion?

Finally, with a deep sigh, I advised him to forget the whole affair; and, so far as I know, he has done so.

Advice to Prospective New England Antique Dealers

"What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?"

—Mrs. Hemans.

ADVICE TO PROSPECTIVE NEW ENGLAND ANTIQUE DEALERS

THE modern Pilgrim who ventures within the stern and rockbound limits of New England demands large quantities of antiques, as is indicated by the number of antique marts along the roadsides.

If Mrs. Felicia Dorothea Hemans, who was the originator of the line about the stern and rockbound coast, had asked her celebrated question, "What sought they thus afar?" of an observer of the modern Pilgrims—"What sought they thus afar? Bright jewels of the mine?"—and had paused for a moment to catch her breath, any experienced observer would be able to tell her what it is that they seek.

The most careless examination of New England antique shops would clearly demonstrate that they seek tavern tables, pie-crust tables, thousand-legged tables, ordinary tables, cracked sap kettles, old bitters bottles, spinning wheels, sundials, H and L hinges, hand-wrought strap hinges, dilapidated doors, corner cupboards, tin lanterns, four-poster beds, pewter coffee pots, wagon seats, tin kitchen utensils, ship models that look as though

they had been carved by a ship's cook with a meat cleaver, old Wallopshire china, old tape-work portrait rugs, broken spinning wheels, pine milking stools, cast-iron banks, Stiegel glass, Sandwich glass, moustache cups, toothbrush tumblers, hooked rugs and hooked Windsor chairs, hooked church pews, hooked andirons, highboys, lowboys, beanpots, mortars and pestles, Rogers groups, china pug dogs, old coloured prints of young ladies with their underdrawers showing, rare old glass dishes resembling those that may be had in five-and-ten cent stores, pure tin tea caddies, old door sills, old door frames, old door knobs, old pieces of wainscoting, old bricks, old grindstones, old ax helves, old buggy whips, old stoves, and a number of other old things whose reason for existing is thoroughly clear to the lover of early New England.

It is obvious that a New England tourist cannot be interested in bright jewels of the mine when he sees an antique shop and starts to run down a fine old three-legged sofa or a rare sample of Colonial ricochet work which, as is well known, was made by placing a canvas four feet in front of a brick wall, standing twenty feet away, and throwing paint at the wall so that it would bounce off against the canvas and form a design.

The number of antique shops that have sprung into being all over New England within the last few years is large and uncertain. To count them

is fruitless, because by the time one has finished counting, several hundred new ones have sprung into existence. This shows beyond peradventure that there is room for more.

At a casual estimate one finds it difficult to travel more than two miles in any direction on any road in New England without running against an Antique sign. The passenger traffic on New England roads during the summer months clearly justifies one antique shop to every fifty yards of paved highway.

Matters are made easier for the antique dealer in New England by the fact that he is justified in doubling in other commodities such as cider, fresh eggs, or maple sugar, or in Fir Pillows and Home Cooking, or in anything else that is convenient, like police dog puppies or doughnuts. An antique shop may be run in conjunction with a tea shoppe, a gift shoppe, a hat shoppe, or any of the other shoppes designed to make life more livable for modern Pilgrims.

It is, indeed, almost a public duty to alleviate the suffering of the increasing number of summer automobilists who are troubled with recurrent antique fever, and who shake all over in a pitiable manner unless permitted to enter a cool shop and brood over dusty relics of periods ranging from the Boston Tea Party to the Chester A. Arthur.

It should be clear to any antique dealer that

the world is improved by making people happier. Travellers come to New England to be made happy; and those who suffer from the antique fever can only be made happy by being allowed to discover and purchase a fine New England antique. To tell an antique hunter in New England that the supply of antiques has run out is tantamount to throwing him into a fit of depression that may discolour his entire life and the lives of his descendants.

Take, for example, the matter of New England corner cupboards. These are occasionally found in New England homes at the present day, but can seldom be purchased because the owners, being familiar with current antique literature, are planning to sell them for a sum sufficiently large to send seven children to college and to buy the college.

Consequently, the antique dealer who ventures into the New England field should never attempt to acquire such things as excellently built and carefully carved old pine corner cupboards with tops that arch over like the fluted edge of a scallop shell. He should turn his attention to plain corner cupboards, built by careless workmen out of poor pine seventy and eighty and a hundred years ago, that are sketchily put together, not carved at all, moderately rickety, and quite incapable of harmonizing with anything except kitchen furniture.

For these a New England antique dealer may and should freely demand from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and eighty dollars—not because the wood or the lines or the workmanship or the finish are in any way beautiful, but because they are the work of New England workmen—a fact which automatically triples the price of any antique.

Nor should the enterprising antique dealer despair if he is unable to locate genuine corner cupboards of either the good or the bad variety. Any conscientious carpenter, by devoting two days' work to twenty dollars' worth of clear pine, can make a corner cupboard as good, as graceful, as durable, as beautiful, and as useful as any of the more ancient ones. These, when buried beneath a manure pile for one week, develop a beautiful brown tone and a delightfully moth-eaten appearance that will satisfy and delight any tourist. If the dealer objects to the odour of manure, he can dye the new pine with a weak solution of seal brown Diamond Dye, shellac it, rub it with steel wool and wax it. This is not quite as good as the manure treatment; but it is good enough to baffle any amateur collector.

Fortunately, the day has gone when persons bought antiques because they were more beautiful and more substantial than things that are made at the present day, and bought them at prices cheaper or little higher than they would be ob-

liged to pay for their modern equivalents. Once upon a time there may have been good reasons for paying a high price for sturdy and graceful old furniture from the designs of such master craftsmen as Heppelwhite, Sheraton, Shearer, Duncan Phyfe, the Adam brothers, Chippendale, Manwaring, Ince, and Mayhew; but it must be remembered that this sort of furniture can readily be duplicated nowadays by any Grand Rapids furniture manufacturer. The rougher type of furniture with which the New England dealer can now stock his shop, however, cannot be manufactured in any factory. It would obviously be impossible for a furniture factory to manufacture a pine blanket chest with patches in the top and front, and with splinters worn from the legs and sides by throwing it in and out of a barn every little while. This must be borne in mind by the progressive New England dealer.

The person who contemplates entering the field of antique dealing in New England should strive to enable the modern Pilgrim to pick up enough chairs, bedsteads, tables, hooked rugs, door hinges, kettles, chests, and whatnot to furnish a house with genuine or nearly genuine pine pieces for about ten thousand dollars. For this sum, the enthusiastic collector ought to be able to develop a home that will have an individual look impossible to duplicate by anyone who insists on using or-

Picking up rare old bits of pewter for virtually nothing at a dealer's. By exercising great care the collector can add almost anything to his smaller pewters in this way.

dinary furniture adapted to comfortable sitting and sleeping.

If the collector insists on the more pretentious pieces of mahogany and walnut, the dealer should make it possible for him to purchase enough to furnish a small six-room house for something like fifty thousand dollars.

"Not as the conqueror comes," wrote Mrs. Hemans, speaking of the Pilgrim Fathers—"Not as the conqueror comes, They, the true-hearted came; Not with the roll of the stirring drums . . ." The modern Pilgrim, also, does not come with the roll of the stirring drum, but he has another sort of roll which, for his own pleasure and amusement, he must be permitted to spend for antiques. If he can be persuaded to exchange the roll for as little as two or three moth-eaten tables and a pewter egg beater, instead of for a greater number of objects, there will be all the more antiques for other Pilgrims.

One of the great mistakes frequently made by New England antique dealers is their failure to place a sufficiently high valuation on their stock of antiques. This is often due to their inability to keep pace with the rapidity with which the antique fever mounts in the minds of individuals.

The modern New England antique dealer must remember that every New England farmer knows that the sum of five thousand dollars has often been paid for pieces of New England furniture

over four feet in length. His lowest valuation on anything as large or larger than that is seldom, therefore, under one thousand dollars.

The dealer will be shortsighted if he permits his ideas to be more modest than those of the farmer. The psychology of this is simple. If the dealer possesses a Sheraton sofa worth about three hundred dollars and is asked the price of it, he should quickly reply, "Three thousand dollars."

The persons who are told this price will then point to any Sheraton sofa which they may chance to possess, and remark: "That sofa is worth over three thousand dollars because that's what they're getting for them in New England."

In a comparatively short time somebody with the roll with which the modern Pilgrim comes will need a Sheraton sofa and willingly pay three thousand dollars for it. Thus the market value of Sheraton sofas will be permanently established in New England.

In connection with antique shops, a word concerning tea rooms and gift shoppes, which can frequently be amalgamated with the profession of antique dealing, will not be amiss.

Since the modern Pilgrim is lured to New England by tales of its scenery, all shops and shoppes can best be brought to the attention of travellers by placing advertisements of them between the traveller and the scenery, in spots not preëmpted

by fried-clam stands, frankfurter merchants, and lobster bungalows.

Such advertisements may be made more appealing if the shoppe owners adopt the mangled spelling commonly believed to have obtained in Pilgrim circles, where spelling was largely subordinated to the business of scratching a living out of the earth and storing up the antiques which lure the present Pilgrims to New England. Thus a gift shoppe should be a shoppe and never a shop. A subtle air of distinction would vanish from the shoppe that dared to come right out and call itself a shop.

Ye Olde Shippe Shoppe, Ye Olde Stage Coache Shoppe, and Ye Olde Skulle & Crosse Bones Shoppe are styles that may safely be used by shoppe owners; and the word "Olde" can be used in connection with such an establishment three minutes after ye last brush-full of painte has been applied to ye fronte doore.

The combination of "Ye," "Olde," and "Shoppe" on a signboard, however, should mean that at the dwelling advertised by the sign one can purchase Chinese near-amber beads, cigarette boxes in tooled leather, delicately coloured German prints, playing cards, silk scarves, pure bone cigarette holders, antiques, and tea.

The gift shoppe is an institution that has done much to make stern and rockbound New England infinitely less stern. Christmas would have been

a very different matter for the Pilgrim Fathers if they could have gone over to Ye Olde Scrambled Egge Shoppe around December 24th and bought each other perfectly corking gifts done up in blue boxes and tied with pink ribbons.

Furnishing a Cape Cod Cottage on a Budget

"There is one great hope for American antique collectors and dealers," said Professor Kilgallen, rubbing a bit of furniture polish on his heated brow after a protracted session of note taking, and surreptitiously taking a swallow or two from the bottle before replacing it in his Chippendale cellaret. "That hope lies in Empire furniture. In a few years' time the British dealers will be selling to the American public by mail, thus eliminating the two hundred per cent. profit which the American dealer now adds to his British furniture. There will be nothing left in America but Empire stuff. Already Empire chairs, bureaus, and tables are eagerly purchased on the Pacific coast, where 1849 *marked the very dawn of history; and there are signs that this terrible stuff will once more be in general use.*

"All I hope," added the Professor, as he again reached desperately for the furniture-polish bottle, "is that I won't be here to see it."

FURNISHING A CAPE COD COTTAGE ON A BUDGET

THERE is a growing inclination on the part of young people who are embarking on the sea of matrimony to furnish their homes with antiques of character and distinction—with furniture that has good design, that is excellent in colour, and that is acquired after months of careful search in quaint and out-of-the-way shops.

Young married couples come to me with increasing frequency, begging me to tell them what to buy and where to buy it and how much to spend on it. It is for these delightful young things, dewy eyed, trusting, and unscarred by contact with a deceitful world, that I have compiled a set of simple directions by means of which the young bride and groom may embark on their quest for antiques without encountering too many of the trials and tribulations that beset the paths of those who aspire to a home that combines real atmosphere with genuine charm.

If the two young people have their own way to make in the world, it is better that they devote themselves to the furnishing of a small home rather than a large home. There are several argu-

ments in favour of this line of reasoning. A small home is not only smaller than a large home, but it lends itself better to the utilization of the smaller and more intimate types of early American antiques. These types are not only submerged in a larger home, but they may also be found more readily in the smaller type of antique shops which will naturally be encountered by a bashful young couple, who are sometimes averse to venturing into the larger and more elaborate establishments.

Furthermore, a small home may be furnished more quickly than a larger home; and it has been my experience that a bride and groom frequently suffer from the impatience of youth and prefer to live immediately with and among their furnishings rather than to live for fifteen or twenty or twenty-five years in a partially furnished house while hunting for the number of antiques required to equip a larger house in every detail.

For this reason I have selected the Cape Cod Cottage as being the type of house best adapted to the young couple of moderate means. The Cape Cod Cottage is easily adapted to almost any sized lot, either in the city or in the country. One may, if one wishes, place a Cape Cod Cottage on a lot twenty-five feet wide and fifty feet deep, and still retain whatever existing features there may be on the lot—such features, for example, as a tennis court, a hen house, a dog house, a grove of pine trees, two or more stone walls, a wood pile, a

Picture now in the possession of Mrs. Sherwood Rollins, a lineal descendant of Professor Kilgallen.

Home of Professor Kilgallen at Barnacle Cove, Maine, showing skillful blending of Chippendale, Sheraton, Heppelwhite, Dewar and Pommeroy & Greno influences. The offsetting of the Heppelwhite arches at the left with the Chinese Chippendale garage at the right is considered a stroke of genius. The picture shows Professor Kilgallen seated on the front lawn with his favourite wire-haired terrier. Many of his notes were made in a room on the opposite side of the house.

kitchen garden, a swimming pool, an orangerie or an applerie, a blueberry or cranberry patch, a quaint old lilac bush, or any of the beautiful natural advantages that even the smallest lot sometimes boasts.

Some ingenuity may be required in order to fit the Cape Cod Cottage into these natural advantages; but the satisfaction that results from a successful fitting more than repays the fitter for his labours. With a Cap Cod Cottage, one may always be sure of eventually being able to fit it into even the most congested surroundings—a feat that would be impossible with a Georgian house or the more pretentious type of Colonial home.

A sense of false pride might prevent a young couple from attempting to fit a Georgian house between a hen house and a wood pile in such a manner as to retain an existing tennis court on a twenty-five-foot lot.

All in all, the Cape Cod Cottage is the ideal type of dwelling for the young married couple with a love for antiques.

Strictly speaking, the conventional Cape Cod Cottage has four rooms, two downstairs and two upstairs. By cleverly adapting the Cape Cod Cottage to the existing terrain, or ingeniously making use of an existing dog house on the property, the two downstairs rooms may be expanded to three. For the purposes of the young antique lovers, however, the Cape Cod Cottage may be

said to have four rooms—two downstairs and two upstairs. Consequently, the young couple need only consider the purchase of enough furniture to furnish a living room, a dining room, and two bedrooms. The kitchen, if kitchen there be, may be so designed that any person entering it will be unwilling or unable to sit down. The Cape Cod Cottage lends itself admirably to such a design. This, of course, effects a saving in expense that is not to be despised by two young people dependent on their own resources.

In furnishing the living room, I would suggest that the young couple refrain from purchasing the more elaborate type of furniture. In purchasing a lowboy, for example, it is not essential that the lowboy be elaborately carved. A lowboy with richly carved apron and knees may, of course, be had for five thousand or six thousand dollars; but a long and arduous hunt is frequently necessary before a perfect specimen can be obtained. For that reason, one of the simpler types of lowboy is to be preferred; and an expenditure of twelve hundred dollars for such a piece of furniture should be ample.

A candle stand is, of course, an absolute necessity in a Cape Cod Cottage; but a pine candle stand at eighty-five dollars will answer the purpose as well as a walnut candle stand at four hundred and fifty dollars, especially since one may be obliged to hunt assiduously for five or six years

in order to find the walnut variety. By the time one found a walnut candle stand, one might be obliged to move into another sort of house in which a walnut candle stand would not be in key with the necessary furnishings. It is therefore better to have the use of a candle stand, even though one uses the simpler sort. In such ways as this a large saving may readily be effected on the budget.

LIVING-ROOM BUDGET

Carpet—green chenille	$ 267.00
3 pair ruffed net curtains	25.20
3 pair glazed chintz overcurtains with valances, $55 a pair	165.00
Simple Sheraton sofa	1650.00
2 banister-back armchairs	220.00
1 candle stand	85.00
Ship *Flying Cloud*—Currier & Ives print	460.00
Little Katie—Currier & Ives print	30.00
1 pine tavern table with legs splayed both ways	260.00
1 small table beside sofa—pine	125.00
1 pair corner cabinets	700.00
1 Chippendale mirror	750.00
4 Windsor chairs	290.00
1 lavender whisky flask	300.00
1 Wistarburg bottle for lamp	90.00
1 shade for same	3.15
1 gate-legged table in mahogany	1475.00
1 lowboy	1200.00
Heppelwhite wing chair covered in green brocade	420.00
Extra table	75.00
1 andiron set	80.00
1 maple and pine desk	225.00
1 Martha Washington chair covered in henna sunfast	850.00
3 pewter plates for mantel	150.00
One hooked rug, 3 feet by 2 feet	70.00
1 hooked rug, 4 feet by 5 feet	345.00
4 pewter communion cups for cigarettes	80.00
TOTAL	$ 10,390.35

AROUND ELEVEN THOUSAND DOLLARS should, with the exercise of the proper amount of care and good taste, furnish a small and simple living room in almost any Cape Cod Cottage. I have purposely made the budget somewhat smaller to allow for minor repairs being made on pieces of furniture that fall off the truck in transit between the antique shops and the cottage, as well as for the many little expenses that are constantly cropping up in connection with the purchase of antique furniture. A leeway of six hundred and nine dollars and sixty-five cents has been allowed. The sixty-five cents is for postage, which will be needed in writing to antique dealers to ask how and when the purchased articles were shipped.

The whisky flask included in this budget is intended for decorative purposes only. The lavender whisky flasks come higher than the green or aquamarine flasks; but the satisfaction that is obtained from the lavender flask is correspondingly greater. A saving may be effected in the budget by utilizing the flask as a lamp and eliminating the Wistarburg bottle. In this case one should subtract ninety dollars from the budget for the Wistarburg bottle, and add thirty-seven dollars and fifty cents for wiring the flask and purchasing a shade. Care should be exercised in selecting an electrician, as electricians in the neighbourhood of Cape Cod cottages are greatly given to dropping empty flasks. A dropped lavender flask

Rare Croton & Fusil print. Skating Scene on the Drinking-Water Reservoir.

may easily upset an entire budget, and nothing can be gained by suing the electrician.

THE DINING ROOM should have an old-time quality, which is best obtained by using a Heppelwhite sideboard with a Sheraton table, or a Sheraton sideboard with a Heppelwhite table. Heppelwhite sideboards may be obtained all the way up to eight thousand dollars and even higher, depending on the amount of inlay and the gracefulness of the legs. The amount of inlay on a sideboard should, however, vary inversely with the age of the couple that purchases it. A very young couple needs less inlay than an older couple. Consequently, I have arbitrarily put the price of the Heppelwhite sideboard in my budget at $900. The young couple may, if they wish, spend more than $900 for the sideboard, though I would advise against it.

DINING-ROOM BUDGET

6 Chippendale chairs, two arm and six sides	$ 5,000.00
Sheffield cake basket	75.00
Cake	.80
Heppelwhite sideboard	1,200.00
Sheraton dining table, fluted legs	750.00
Flower painting showing asters, sunflowers, wild asparagus, and garlic	325.00
Serving table, mahogany	340.00
Net curtains	22.00
1 Adam mirror	425.00
Cigarette lighter	7.50
TOTAL	$ 8,144.30

BATHROOM BUDGET

1 cake soap ..... .35

THE MASTER'S ROOM

IN THE MASTER'S BEDROOM one should strive for lightness and delicacy, without fussiness. Hooked rugs with a tan background and beautifully coloured flower patterns are advisable; and Sheraton or Heppelwhite furniture would be most fitting. The lighter form of Chippendale tables can, if desired, be used, especially if the master's tastes run toward chinoiserie.

BUDGET

Carpet	$ 81.00
5 pair ruffled cream net curtains, $8.40 a pair	42.00
5 pair overcurtains—blue, green, and satiny yellow chintz, no valances	230.00
Four-post Sheraton mahogany bed	420.00
Dotted-swiss canopy for bed	55.00
Spring and mattress	93.90
Upholstered Heppelwhite chair and stool	465.25
Mahogany night stands, Sheraton	160.00
Paper cutter for same (modern)	.50
Small Sheraton table with drawers	250.00
Extra table, Chinese Chippendale with fretted apron and tri-columnar legs	1280.00
Pair of Adam side chairs	220.00
Chippendale gilt mirror	850.00
Bedspread—cream candlewick	80.00
2 Sandwich glass reading lamps	88.00
Shades for same	2.30
Serpentine front chest of drawers	490.00
Mahogany Queen Anne shaving mirror and stand	120.00
Hooked rug—6 x 8	950.00
Hooked rug—4 x 3	120.00
Hooked rug—4 x 3	90.00
Tin breakfast tray (modern)	1.89
TOTAL	$ 6089.84

THE GUEST ROOM

THE FURNISHINGS OF THE GUEST ROOM should be neither tiring nor exacting. This effect may be obtained by using a chintz that combines such restful colours as red, yellow, mauve, green, orange, blue and black, with here and there a touch of taupe or oatmeal. The oatmeal effect may be obtained in an original and fetching way by wiping well-cooked oatmeal on the curtains at irregular intervals. Care should be excercised, in case the oatmeal is applied in this way, not to get a spotty effect.

Curly maple may be used to good advantage in the guest room; and no harm will be done if an occasional Empire piece is inserted. Empire is returning to popularity, and in a few years' time one will be obliged to pay three hundred dollars for Empire sofas and bureaus that self-respecting antique dealers now refuse to have on the premises.

One may, in short, take a chance on a guest room. Few guests know an antique when they see it; and if the emphasis is put on quaintness, most guests will be thoroughly satisfied.

BUDGET

Mauve carpet	$ 65.00
3 pair ruffled cream net curtains	25.20
3 pair overcurtains with valances and tiebacks	138.42
2 Curly maple beds—semi-antique	65.00
Maple bedside table	7.00
1 upholstered chair with legs concealed	14.00

Empire chest of drawers	4.00
Pine dressing table and mirror (*circa* 1828)	16.00
2 electrified whale-oil lamps	6.00
1 Chippendale mirror	1650.00
TOTAL	$ 1990.62

A CAPE COD COTTAGE can be bought for prices ranging from eighteen hundred dollars to eighteen thousand dollars, depending on its location and the extent to which the real-estate boom has progressed. A fair average price for a Cape Cod Cottage, however, is and always will be about three thousand dollars.

With care and a well-regulated budget, one should easily be able to purchase and furnish a Cape Cod Cottage for thirty thousand dollars—three thousand dollars for the house and land and twenty-seven thousand dollars for the furniture.

These figures are subject to change without notice. Some of the leading antique dealers and life-insurance actuaries, after studying the price rise in antiques during the past ten years, have compiled tables showing the probable value of a fine piece of furniture at five-year intervals, barring fires, pestilences, earthquakes, and other acts of God. This table shows that a fine Chippendale chair worth three hundred and fifty dollars in 1928 would be worth one hundred and sixty-two thousand in 2128. Basing one's calculations on this table, one finds that Cape Cod Cottage fur-

nishings costing twenty-seven thousand in 1928 would increase in value in the following manner:

1933	$ 61,500.00
1938	136,488.36
1943	388,311.27
1948	721,762.00
1953	1,828,396.11
1958	2,471,319.86
1963	5,822,765.19
1968	11,136,994.73

If prices continue to rise in the future as they have risen in the past subsequent to 1910, a man will have to work all his life in order to buy one Chippendale table leg.

The More Important Terms Used in Antiqueing

(With Sentences by Prominent American Dealers and Collectors Showing Proper Use of Each Term)

"The stevedore cannot understand the college professor unless he can speak the professor's language; nor can the professor understand the stevedore. Similarly, the American cannot understand the Italian or the Russian or the Englishman unless he speaks his language; and above all, the antique collector can never understand antiques or the antique dealer until he has obtained a smattering of the language of antiques."

—Cornelius Obenchain Van Loot.

THE MORE IMPORTANT TERMS USED IN ANTIQUEING

APRON—Rim or rail which hangs beneath table top, chair seat, or highboy body.

"It'll cost you another century with a carved apron."
—*Oswald Keep.*

BLOCK FRONT—The front of a desk or chest of drawers that is carved into sudden swellings or blocks.

"I wouldn't have one of those damned block fronts in the house."
—*Jermyn Van Able.*

BOMBÉ—A desk or chest of drawers that swells bulbously at the bottom.

"Helderman bought a bombé desk, and now he's got to build a new house to live up to it."
—*Gregory Cheeves.*

BROKEN ARCH—The top of a secretary or highboy which seems to have suffered the loss of a piece from the middle.

"There's new tips on that broken arch."
—*S. B. Kiblein.*

BUM—An inferior antique, generally pine or maple.

"He goes out to half a dozen antique shops every Saturday and comes home with a lot of bum stuff."
—*Charles D. Fetter.*

CABRIOLE LEG—A slender leg, curved like the leg of a very bow-legged man.

"Whenever I go out in the country I carry one cabriole leg to show the hicks, and I say 'Got anything with legs like that?';but they're getting onto themselves and now every hick in the world thinks that anything with cabriole legs is worth a thousand dollars."
—*John Egremont.*

CAN—To eject because of pressure from superior antiques.

"As soon as you get in some decent Chippendale, you have to can that lousy pine stuff."
—*Mortimer D. Mortimer.*

CURLY MAPLE—A form of maple with regular spaced black streaks in it. The streaks were originally intended to be concealed under several coats of paint.

See Chippendale

CARCASS—Body of desk, chest of drawers, etc.

"All you need is the carcass: you can stick brasses, legs and top on it and fool any sucker that rides in a Buick."
—*Thurlow Tap.*

CHIPPENDALE—Thomas Chippendale, died 1779: Most famous of English cabinet-

makers: neither he nor his furniture, as late as 1895, was considered important enough to be included in the Century Dictionary and Encyclopedia.

"Let me have the Chippendale and I care not who gets the curly maple."

—*Oscar Dabney.*

CURRIER & IVES—Makers of cheap prints to sell to yokels and servant girls for five or ten cents.

"And in the living room I hung a perfect love of a Currier & Ives that I bought for a mere two hundred dollars."

—*Mrs. Van Ettelstone de Tolna.*

DUPONTS (THE)—Prominent antique collectors.

"That's a fine piece. If I write the Duponts about it, they'll probably take it."

—*Sayings of New England Antique Dealers.*

EMPIRE—The heavyweight brand of furniture turned out during and after the Napoleonic era.

"Some people like Empire, but I prefer Holstein Cows."

—*Rex Magnan.*

FLOP—An antique that fails to give satisfaction.

"The saps always fall for chairs that don't have any rake, and they're always flops."

—*Ponsonby Price.*

FROST—Nearly the same as flop, only slightly less so.

"How was that tavern table your husband bought for two hundred?"
"It was a frost. It had two new legs, four new stretchers and a new top."
—*Senate Investigation of the Madison Avenue Antique Situation.*

FAT-HEAD—A person unskilled in antique lore.

"When a fat-head wanders into an antique shop, the antique dealer is in honour bound to saw off his junk on him."
—*Exengren Lionback.*

FEET (Block, Bun, Button, Bracket, Ogee Bracket, Ball and Claw, Club, Dutch, Duck, Dog, Flemish, French, Hoof, Lion's Paw, Moulded, Scroll, Snake, Spade, Spanish, Web).

"Nice feet on that table!"
—*Mrs. Henry Wilkenny.*

FORD (Henry)—A prominent antique collector.

"If you like it, you'd better grab it; because I'm expecting one of Henry Ford's buyers up here to-morrow, and he'll probably take it."
—*Herriot Stuck.*

JUNK—Somebody else's antiques.

"He's got a lot of bum pewter and pine and Currier & Ives and junk like that."
—*Harrison L. Hinkman.*

LOOP (*to knock for a*)—To overwhelm with a magnificent antique.

"Stop in to see me when you come down my way: I've got a corner cupboard that'll knock you for a loop."
—*Clyde Walbrath.*

LOUSY—Imperfect or slightly below par.

"He spoke with such veneration of his hooked rugs that I hastened over to look at them, but they were lousy."
—*Carl de Plevnin.*

MURDERER—An antique dealer whose prices are higher than others in the neighbourhood.

"The dirty murderer wanted to nick me seventy dollars for a lousy bannister back armchair."
—*H. D. Sinsabaugh.*

MUSEUM—A place that ought to be filled with every unsalable object in the possession of every antique dealer.

"You ought to have that table, mister; that's a museum piece!"
—*Johnson Firkin.*

PAN—To depreciate by innuendo or direct statement.

"I was up to see an old man near Dover, and after I'd panned hell out of a Heppelwhite sideboard, he was glad to sell it to me for fifty dollars."
—*L. F. Cripson.*

PIECE OF CHEESE—An antique that falls short of perfection in two or more important details.

"Maybe that Chippendale chair, with new stretchers and a new top rail and phoney arms, wasn't a piece of cheese!"

—*Edson Sourbenk.*

PUNK—Not so good, but superior to "lousy."

"You say those legs are right, but they look pretty punk to me."

—*Handbook, Maine Antique-Purchasers Ass'n.*

QUAINT—An antique with little character and slight merit.

"Now there's what I call a real quaint piece—real old pine."

—*Thomas Tink.*

RAKE—(1) The backward slant of a chair back. (2) To search, as for antiques.

"You could rake hell and strain the ocean and not find a crookeder louse than you."

—*John C. Fairbank's Address to an Antique Dealer.*

RIGHT—Devoid of chicanery on the part of antique dealers.

"Yes, sir: that table's all there: that table's RIGHT."

—*Robert C. Vasectomy.*

REPLACEMENTS—Something that most antique dealers try to lie out of, and something that the average antique purchaser can't see unless his nose is rubbed in it.

"No, sir! There ain't any replacements on that chest of drawers. . . . No, sir! that's an original piece. . . . Well, yes: the back legs are new . . . yes, those brasses

are new. . . . Well, it's practically perfectly original. . . . I didn't notice those replacements 'till you spoke of 'em."

—Algernon Peasly Whistle.

SANDWICH—Glass of the sort sold in five-and-ten-cent stores.

"Sandwich glass looks real swell against black velvet. . . . Yes'm; that plate is twenty-six dollars."

—Sayings of New England Antique Dealers.

SAW OFF—To foist: to sell by determined efforts.

"I sawed off that sleigh seat on a sap for eighty dollars."

—Herbert L. Middlebum.

SICK—A disease of glass which causes the glass to look slightly fogged or milky. Dealers are able to prescribe many cures for sick glass, but none of the cures ever work.

"I told this sucker that he could cure that sick bottle with castor oil, and he fell for it."

—Terence Cohen.

STIEGEL—Any light-weight piece of glass in any antique shop.

"They say it's Stiegel, but I don't know. . . . Yes'm, you can have it for two hundred dollars."

—Proprietor of Ye Olde Shoppe.

SUCKER—A person who purchases antiques without expert knowledge.

"You can hook a sucker with two wormholes and a line of talk."

—Sayings of New England Antique Dealers.

TRIPE—The average article in the average antique shop.

"A junk dealer would starve to death on such tripe as this: it takes an antique dealer to make a living out of it."

—*Solon Keller.*